THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION VOLUME 1, NUMBER 10 MARCH 1991

FREE

WORKS IN PROGRESS

"My religion teaches me to love even an evil-doer, and my non-co-operation is but part of that religion." M.K. Gandhi

Digging For The Truth

Patricia Holm

On Saturday, Feb 16 about 500 people gathered in Sylvester Park to hear women speak, and to acknowledge the war dead. It was followed by a funeral march through downtown Olympia and ended with a eulogy and symbolic burial on the Capitol grounds.

Stacy Small, an accomplished violinist, accompanied us on the march, playing as she walked. I asked her what music she had been playing. She said it was a combination of many dirges and much funeral music she had heard and studied over the years. But it wasn't a performance, she said, "I played whatever came out, only my own sadness. Whatever we're doing here, people are dying there." Her music along with the drummers was the soul of the march.

As the funeral march arrived at the capitol steps, the pallbearers placed seven coffins, representing human casualties from the U.S., Syria, Israel, Palestine, Kuwait, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia on the capital steps and draped homemade flags over them. Among the coffins representing the human dead, there was also one representing our fragile planet, Earth. The marchers placed flowers they had carried on these flag draped coffins. It was a beautiful and moving sight. Tears were in my eyes as I put my one red rose on the Israeli coffin and thought of all the dead and suffering people in that far away region.

Photo by Gale Parrish

Spontaneously, people picked up the coffins and took them to the grassy area in front of the capitol steps. They quickly began to dig into the grass with garden trowels placing clumps of sod on the coffins as a civil disobedient act while others watched. The police began arresting those who were digging and put them in a police van and two police cars. Other mourners surrounded the police vehicles, sat down and linked arms to prevent the police from taking away those arrested. Police then started to drag away those obstructing the vehicles, but there were too many people and too few police. The police changed their minds and decided to wait until the people left. The police were eventually able to take the 14 people to the Olympia jail, charged them with malicious mischief, gave them a court date of Feb 25th, Monday morning at 11:00 a.m. and released them on their own personal recognizance.

At the Olympia police station, the men were immediately separated from the women. An Officer ordered, "Men over here, girls over here." When women asked to be called women, Officer Mehan said "a!right then, women-bitches whatever." They asked to have their handcuffs loosened as the cuffs were cutting off circulation and an officer replied, "we're looking for the clippers" while the clippers were visibly in their hands. The women were treated to teasing questions about why they would disobey the law. One policeman told them the pain of the handcuffs was only temporary. A woman replied, "The effects of the war are not going to be temporary." An Officer said, "Who's it (the war) going to affect? Maybe gas prices at the pump." The policeman in charge soon put a stop to the verbal harassment. Some of the men who had been arrested said they had been treated well.

While waiting for a friend at the police department, I decided to write this article and ask each person why they had committed these acts of civil disobedience. Here are some of their replies:

Tears were in my eyes as I put my one red rose on the Israeli coffin and thought of all the dead and suffering people in that faraway region.

Galilee, the first woman to emerge from the police station was visibly shaken. She had decided just before the arrests not to be one of those arrested. However, after carrying one of the coffins throughout the march she said, "I couldn't stop myself from participating in trying to bury the dead. My housemate and I made the flags and carrying the Israeli coffin throughout the march, I felt the weight of all the war deaths."

Joyce, who had given the very moving eulogy at the capital steps, was also arrested. "I hope that the witness of the day will touch the hearts and minds of the people in Olympia to the reality that war is death and that they will be empowered to act against war in whatever way they can."

A young Armenian woman, Beth said, "Going to jail doesn't compare to my sisters dying in the Middle East and my sisters from the United States who are going over there to die in a man's war."

Hali, a 34 year-old mother and a student at South Puget Sound Community College, said, "Because of the extreme censorship by the media, we planned this action to bring the war closer to home. To wake people up to the death and destruction going on. I've become politically active here in Olympia. I'd been running away from it for 17 years." She's taking a course in "The Garden

(Continued on page 3)

Taking Back The Night

Tawnae Kurnoff

At 6:00 pm Saturday, February 9, 1991, approximately 150-200 wimmin gathered in the parking lot of Peterson's Shoprite. The event about to take place was a "Take Back The Night" march, organized and sponsored by the Westside's "Stop Rape" group, which was formed in response to a rape that occurred on December 2,1990, as well as a series of other types of harassment against wimmin.

" The survivor then stood behind the sign and said, "I was raped here on December 2, 1990 and tonight I am taking back this spot!"

The wimmin formed a circle, and candles, along with incense, were lit in the center of this circle. The four directions were addressed, in a cermony-type prayer. The wimmin then did a chant that goes as follows: "Earth my body, water my blood, air my breath, fire my spirit."

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Letters

The Message Is Too Important

Dear WIP,

First, I want to thank the Olympia Anti-Intervention Coalition for creating opportunities for many of us to express our opposition to U.S. policy in the Persian Gulf. But second, I am concerned about some OAIC decisions and would like to share my reactions to two recent events: a 1/14 evening prayer service at the largely-African American New Life Baptist Church and the 1/15 OAIC peace rally culminating in the "occupation" of the State Capitol.

The prayer service was attended by about 40 people. Rev. Wendell Morris presided and spoke powerfully about war and killing. Strong voices came from the congregation, offering their prayers on the eve of Martin Luther King's birthday and, as it turned out, George Bush's command to bomb Iraq. A man spoke about a friend in Saudi Arabia, a woman spoke about her two sons in the Gulf, another woman spoke about a friend having four sons in the Gulf. They prayed for peace, for justice, for God's will to bring these people home safely.

In addition, people prayed for more than 50 people on a list of congregation members' friends or relatives in the Gulf. I loyally read Noam Chomsky and Alex Cockburn, but I was moved in a way their writings don't move me. Chomsky and Cockburn speak well to my mind, rarely to my heart.

The next day at the Capitol, I chanted, I listened to the speeches that correctly — if academically — detailed the ideology behind the war, I watched with some irritation the macho takeover of the Capitol, I felt the absence of many people — including most from the prayer service — who would not have felt comfortable nor included despite their own deeply-felt opposition to war. I left happy about the size of the march, but frustrated with where it took us.

The action was "militant," sure, it sent a message, yes, but who was the message sent to and how was it received? Was it heard by the "working class" and the "disenfranchised" we like to talk about? Did the action reveal that a vanguard group only needs to signal the rest of us for the Revolution to start?

No way. Maybe some march organizers believe that Jesse Jackson and electoral politics in general are beyond redemption, that the masses are ready to follow progressive radicals into a new era and that we thus need above all "a movement ready to go beyond the polls to the streets," but I say that for now that's a one-way ticket to debilitating insignificance.

The Persian Gulf war is too important for grandstanding — tens of thousands of Iraqis may be already dead, 2 million shortly may become refugees, justice for Palestinians grows more distant, Americans are learning to like war again. The Gulf peace movement needs clear, short-term goals, it needs to focus on actions tied to those goals, it needs to include in the planning and implementation of these actions the people about which it sloganizes.

I attended a meeting tonight that showed the movement may be heading that direction. I strongly encourage such re-direction and, once again, thank the OAIC for the work it has done thus far.

Rob Richie

Attacks On Westside Women Are Real and News Worthy

Dear Editor:

A number of rapes with body mutilation are being perpetrated in the Westside Olympia area.

So far, three women have been raped and knife-slashed. I heard about this from one of the victims one month ago (December) and am curious as to why I have not seen nor heard of this in the media.

Victims and concerned citizens meet every Saturday evening from 6-8 pm at the Asterisk coffee shop on Division. I attended the January 12th meeting. There were 40 to 50 people present. On this evening, one victim lay in the hospital in critical condition.

Topics discussed included the victims' experiences, the forming of groups consisting of two or three people to patrol at night, defensive measures in an attack situation, phone lists for support, attack prevention measures, and a planned "Take Back the Night" march.

Also much discussed: citizens are experiencing a stand-offish attitude with the police department, that is, "If you don't officially report this, we can't deal with you", wherein the victim is feeling re-victimized.

Finally, much concern was expressed over The Olympian's decision to publicize the events as a feature story, not as news... A reporter was assigned to the story and cancelled both interviews!

I also attended the January 19th meeting. Armando Machado, staff reporter for the Olympian made an appearance to ask for three representatives from the meeting to meet with him later this week. [*Ed. Note.: This meeting was held but no article was published as a result.*]

Again, the situation with police was discussed. The general attitude is - Police aren't going to do anything for us, so we need to do whatever we can to protect ourselves. Complaints were voiced that police failed to respond to three suspicious circumstance calls, that the police tend to lump these calls into one case, and that officer Barclift has not kept her promise to attend these meetings. The group is scouting for training materials and a facility where these women can "get fit". We were instructed in the use of pocket-size CS-50 Tear Gas.

Somewhere in all this, I feel that the center issue is getting lost- that women in Olympia are being raped and mutilated, terribly few citizens know about this, and this is news.

Lillie Cochran

Sending Out An S.O.S.

This letter was originally sent to the Centralia, Daily Chronicle, but since Curt didn't think they would print it he sent it to us as well.

To the Editors:

The freeway propaganda board in your community says, "America sends S.O.S.--Support Our Soldiers, Stamp Out Saddam."

They forgot one, "Same Old S!$$." United States leaders respond to military aggression with greater military aggression. We choose warfare to protect economic resources. We plot the decimation of a country and its repugnant leadership to strengthen our political control over the lives of people in yet another world region. We send our "defense" forces, with only token international help, on an offensive mission half a world away.

What we haven't done is pressed for a truly international police force to assemble while giving sanctions adequate time to work. We haven't strengthened the United Nations by pushing for equal representation for all member nations. We haven't sought a real "new world order," based on respect for international law and human rights, by judging every nations's aggression by the same moral yardstick and demanding non-violent resolution of regional issues.

Instead, we've added another dose of emotional venom to a world already poisoned by hate. Whatever U.S. - imposed government attempts to rule in this post-invasion setting necessarily will do so by continued political repression and internal terror.

Indeed, we did send a message to the Middle East and the world. It reads, "The United States intends to dominate world politics and deploy our mercenary army in order to unilaterally police the world's miscreants." We'll be paying for this arrogant, violent posture for a long time to come. Yep, the Same Old S!$$.

Sincerely yours,
Curt Pavola

Multicultural Musical Event

Rainbow Rhythms for Peace, a multicultural musical program sponsored by the Washington State Rainbow Coalition, will be held Saturday, March 16, 1991 (from 7:00-9:30 pm) at Mt. Zion Baptist Church (19th and Madison in Seattle).

The performers reflect the broad range of Rainbow membership. They are: Los Mayas (four Guatemalan male musicians), Jackie Hardy (Gospel soloist), The Seattle Women's Ensemble, Esther Littlejohn (flutist, appearing with a few dancers and poet), Mach 10 Posse (rap group), Johnny Moses (Native Amercian storyteller), Jane Harty (Classical pianist, appearing with two violinists), Tribe (Rhythm and blues), F.A.M.E. Gospel Choir, Joe Washington (Lummi elder on drums), and Nikki Louis (Playwright/actress doing a dramatic reading).

Ticket are $25.00-sponsor; $10.00-regular, and $5.00-seniors, students, low income, and children. They can be ordered by mail (check: WSRC-Rainbow Rhythms)to Box 723; Issaquah, Wa. 98027-0723. They can also be purchased (in Seattle) at: CAMP (722-18th), Elliott Bay Bookstore (1st Ave S/S. Main), Red and Black Books (432-15th E) and Blackbird Books (3130 E. Madison). Child care will be available.

For further information, cal Nancy San Carlos at: 392-8222 between 11:00 am and 7:00 pm.

Rainbow Rhythms for Peace

Saturday, March 16, 1991 7:00 pm

Mt. Zion Baptist Church (19th & Madison in Seattle)

April WIP Submission Deadline: March 20

WIP EDITORIAL BOARD

Dave Campbell, Regina Costa, Pat Holm, Matt Love, Evelyn Montague, Marie Smith, Lon Freeman, Tom Freeman, Kendra Jennings, Teresa Jennings, Chris Jordan, Joanne McCaughan, Chris Russo, Sylvia Smith, Pat Tassoni, Al Zimmerman

Works In Progress is a community newspaper sponsored by the Thurston County Rainbow Coalition. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Rainbow Coalition or the WIP Editorial Board.

Keep those letters and cards coming. Correspondence and articles are always welcome. Send submissions to Works in Progress, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507.

(Taking Back, cont. from page 1)

The march went from the parking lot of Peterson's Shoprite, down Harrison hill, turned left on Percival Street, left at the dead ends, and followed Rogers to the Co-Op. The march stopped at the corner of Giles and Rogers, where the December 2 rape had occurred. The survivor of that rape planted a sign there that says, "A woman was raped here on December 2,1990. Take back the night." The survivor then stood behind the sign and said, "I was raped here on December 2, 1990 and tonight I am taking back this spot!"

That night, for the first time in long while, I felt safe, in my town, and on my streets. This place I call home.

The march then progressed to the Olympia Food Co-Op, where there was a short rally. The rally was a place for wimmin to speak about their fear, anger, outrage and ideas for safer wimmin's space.

I was amazed at the number of wimmin who participated in the march. I had been having a hard time even envisioning 50 wimmin, and then to see even more! Looking at all of those wimmin's faces lit by candles, I felt a deep sense of unity and solidarity as well as feminine energy and power. So many faces, with tears shining on them. That night, for the first time in long while, I felt safe, in my town, and on my streets. This place I call home. I feel that the wimmin who participated in the march on Saturday, February 9, empowered themselves, made a stand and a statement to the westside community, as well as all the other outlying communities.

The sign which was planted on February 9 is still there, and people have stopped to read it. But on Wednesday, February 13, 1991, I was coming home from work when I noticed something tacked to the sign. It was another crudely drawn sign, on white paper wrapped in cellophane which said, "A woman Lied Here on Dec. 2, 1990. "Stop " Real Rape."

I found this very distressing, and felt that this was a desecration of a spot that had been "Taken Back" on February 9. Only the survivor and the perpetrator of the attack know what happened there. Only the survivor knows the feelings of anger, rage, and most of all, fear, that goes through her when she walks by that spot every day. And to me, putting up a sign that calls the survivor of rape a liar is discounting the survivor, and is like saying that what she is feeling, what happened to her, and what she has gone through, is not true or did not happen.

This is the sort of attitude which to me, says it is o.k. to rape. This attitude can be changed through education and awareness of the exact nature of the crime. These are just a few of the things the "Stop Rape" group is trying to accomplish.

There have only been 7 or 8 community meetings, and in that time this march was organized and took place. I believe this says something about the integrity, unity, and concern of the majority of the Westside community. We are not just interested in stopping Westside harassments, but in stopping violence against wimmin all around us!

I personally, am not going to allow one person's active denial of the DEC. 2 rape disempower me as a woman, and I sincerely hope that neither the "Stop Rape" group or other wimmin let this attitude disempower them, or lead them astray from their objective to make these streets safer for wimmin. "Wimmin Unite, Take Back The Night!"

Tawnae Kurnoff is a member of Stop Rape.

Differently-abled Prisoners Ask for Help

A group of physically handicapped prisoner in the Washington State system has asked for help in forming a program suited to their special needs.

Plans are to conduct a servey to determine depth of problems, and, grantwriting. We would like to provide counseling and work training while prisoners are still inside, and, upon parole, more intense sounseling and referral to existing community services. Community outreach also will be needed, as well as development of a sesitivity program for corrections personnel.

Anyone interested in working on this can call Nancy San Carlos (392-8222 between 11:00 am and 7:00 pm) or write (105 Mountain Park Blvd SW #202, Issaquah, WA 98027).

"If pizza is an art
To Mamas has the brushes"
"Losing oneself in Olympia"
Sept: 21, 1987, CPJ
Mamas
120 N. PEAR OLYMPIA (206) 943-9849

Support Our Protesters

Come to the Thurson County District Court, 2000 Lakeridge Dr. Blg. 3 on Monday, Feb 25 at 11:00 am and give your support to the fourteen people arrested for civil disobedience last Saturday at the Capitol. They will be arraigned then, and we need to show our appreciation for their courage and commitment to stopping the aggressive war against humanity. Refreshments provided.

(Digging, cont. from page 1)

in Thought and Literature" which focuses on how the landscape of this country has been bulldozed away. "We're experiencing a vast destruction of our ecosystem, somehow thinking that technology will get us out of this mess. I'm looking for a way out of this mass destruction."

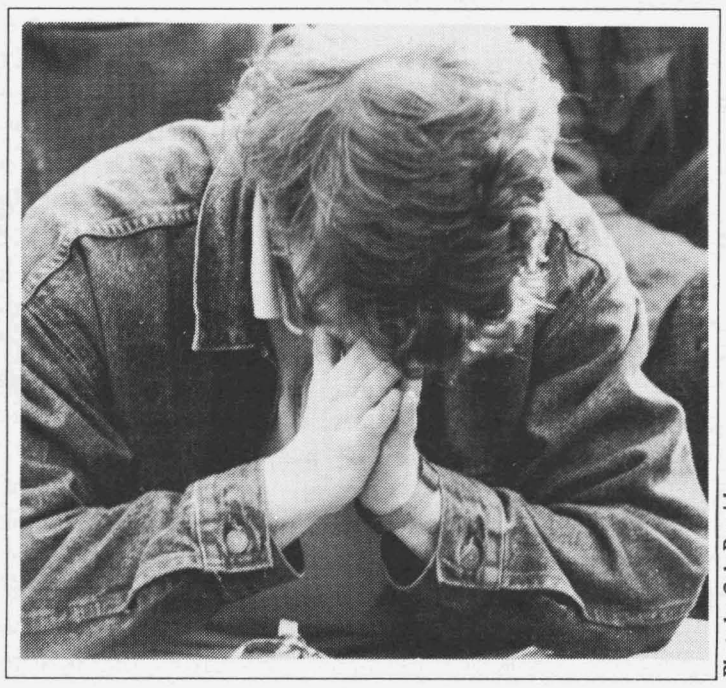


Photo by Gale Parrish

Lars answered, "..for the duty we have to work for peace, the honor of civil disobedience and the country we're trying to make."

Jim replied, "I was reading Thoreau last night. I had to do it."

Tim simply said, "War Sucks."

Duncan said, "I did it because the respect for property has become more important than human life. While people are dying there can be no business as usual." "It was the only thing I could do." Duncan quoted Benjamin Franklin, "The future of America is not about power, our future is about Light."

Amy, a full-time housepainter for Panorama City at night and a student by day, said, "I want people to see this. I support the troops to come home alive. I want to be a part of this statement."

What are the effects of an arrest for Civil Disobedience in Olympia for digging sod with a garden trowel, which the Olympia police call "malicious mischief"?

Another citizen, who was arrested, probably a $75 fine or 'community service.' "I thought that what I was doing when I was digging a grave was a Community Service, insofar as it was helping to raise the consciousness of those who aren't aware that we are killing the earth and its people. I wasn't planning on being arrested. I was arrested for digging with my hands. I saw everybody had been arrested who had been digging with trowels-- so I began digging with my hands. It felt like I was digging for a long time before an officer arrested me."

The Greek tragedy, Antigone, illustrates the importance of burying the dead, with Antigone giving her life to ensure her brother an honorable burial.

Jean Anouilh describes the police in his version of Antigone:

> "...they are the guards... they're not a bad lot. They have wives they are afraid of, kids who are afraid of them; they're bothered by the little day-to-day worries that beset us all. At the same time--they are policemen: eternally innocent, no matter what crimes are committed; eternally indifferent, for nothing that happens can matter to them! They are quite prepared to arrest anybody at all, including Creon (the King) himself, should the order be given by a new leader." Δ

Pat Holm is a member of AFSCME Local 443 and a community activist.

[Ed. Note: See page 12 for related article by those arrested in Saturday's direct action.]

Solidarity

One of the purposes of Local 443 is to promote the objectives of our International AFSCME Article II objective G: "To work with our brothers and sisterss in other lands toward the improvement of the conditions of lives, the work in all countries toward the diminution of International tensions and a reduction in the use of armed force to resolve disputes, and towards genuine fraternity of all workers."

Make your impact on the world.

JOIN THE WASHINGTON FEDERATION OF STATE EMPLOYEES TODAY!

AFSCME - Local 443 - AFL-CIO P.O. Box 105, Olympia, WA 98507
Phone 943-7178 Helen Lee, President

British Imperialism Continued In The Gulf

Alexander Cockburn

The concept of bombing Iraq as an essentially wholesome liaison between morality and western technological prowess goes back to 1919, when Britain sought dominance of the golf oilfields and a docile government in Baghdad as an outcome of World War I. The Royal Air Force asked Winston Churchill, then secretary of state for war, for permission to use chemical weapons, the "smart" bombs of their day, "against recalcitrant Arabs as an experiment." Churchill rejected timid nay-sayers. "I do not understand squeamishness about the use of gas," he wrote. "I am strongly in favor of using poisoned gas against uncivilized tribes...It is not necessary to use only the most deadly gases; gases can be used which would cause great inconvenience and would spread a lively terror and yet would leave no permanent effects on most of those affected."

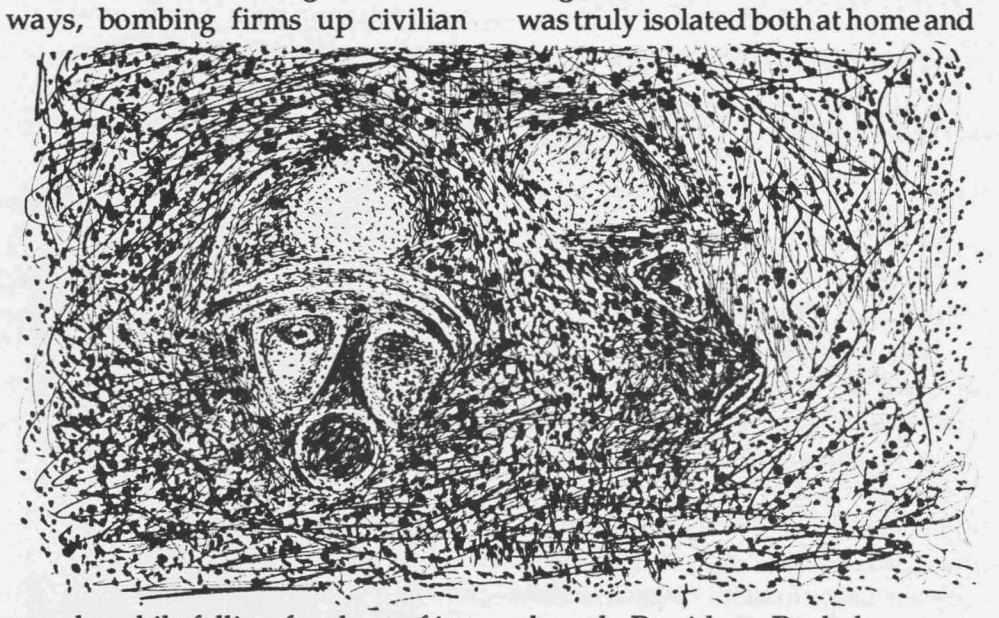
Chemical weapons, Churchill concluded, represent "the application of western science to modern warfare...We cannot in any circumstance acquiesce in the non-utilization of any weapons which are available to procure a speedy termination to the disorder which prevails." From Churchill's view that gas bombs might, if judiciously applied, be merely "inconvenient" to their targets, if is but a short leap to today's hearty applause for the moral properties of Tomahawk and laser-guided bombs as they descend upon Iraq, said applause no doubt being overture to tomorrow's calls for understanding if it becomes necessary to use nuclear weapons to overwhelm Iraqi intransigence.

By 1920 the British army was using gas shells in Iraq with "excellent moral effect." Ordinary shells were used when villagers did not pay their taxes. The Royal Air Force, balked by technical glitches from using the mustard-gas bombs urged by Churchill, dropped explosives with delayed-action fuses to stop peasants cultivating their fields after dark. In today's military briefing room this would doubtless be called "degrading of Iraq's military infrastructure.

The context of the British bombing of the 1920s was crude enough. Churchill, desperate to revive his own unstable political fortunes, was eager to secure British domination of the Iraqi oil fields. The nascent Royal Air Force was anxious to prove its worth and thus secure a larger slice of the arms budget from the army and the navy. The British government, fearful of impending economic recession at home, wanted colonial control on the cheap, with a puppet king installed in Baghdad, other Arab leaders pacified with bribes and control exercised through indirect rule.

"I do not understand squeamishness about the use of gas," Churchill wrote. "I am strongly in favor of using poisoned gas against uncivilized tribes . . . "

When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait, many of the children and grandchildren of those on the receiving end of British bombs did not support his deed. My brother Patrick, in Baghdad reporting for the British Independent newspaper when the bombing started January 16, noted that "On Wednesday, many Iraqis would openly say that going into Kuwait was Saddam's business, not theirs. By the weekend it was almost impossible to meet anybody who did not feel that Iraq would, and should fight." As always, bombing firms up civilian morale, while falling far short of its proclaimed military objectives.

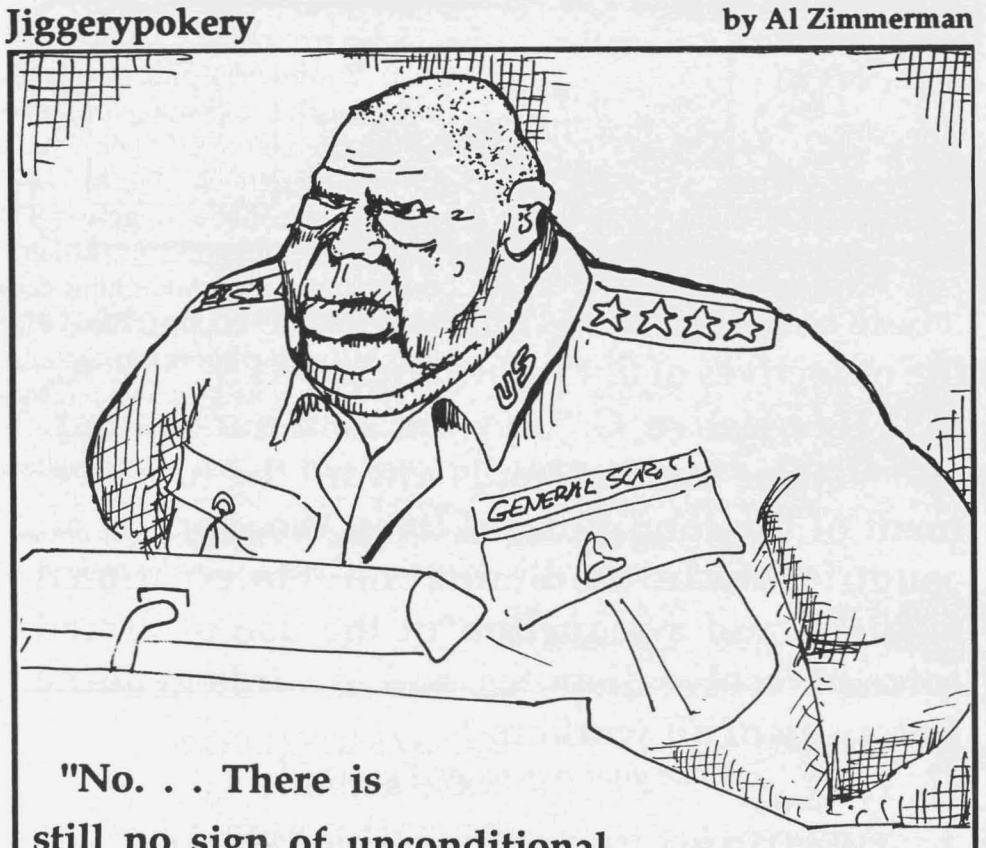


When President Bush first sent troops to the gulf back in August, he proclaimed that they had been despatched purely to defend Saudi Arabia. When he launched Operation Desert Storm on Jan. 16 he swore that the sole object of the exercise was the liberation of Kuwait. A week later, government officials in both Washington and London were stating clearly enough that the object of the exercise was the destruction of Saddam Hussein and the return of Iraq to the vassal status desired by the British 70 years ago.

In moral texture there is little to separate the u.S. president from his Iraqi opposite number. The difference lies in superior resources of violence. From the situation last August, where Saddam Hussein was truly isolated both at home and abroad, President Bush has now firmed Saddam's standing in Iraq and united the peoples of North Africa, the Arab world, and Indian subcontinent, Malaysia and Indonesia in admiration of Saddam and execration of the United States. He has simultaneously debased--probably forever--any claims that the United Nations might ever have had to be a supranational body rather than the creature of U.S. policy, a policy which, to many especially in the Third Word, resembles exactly the plans of Churchill for Iraq in the waning moments of British imperialism. © 1991

Jiggerypokery

by Al Zimmerman



"No. . . There is still no sign of unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait. . . They continue to stubbornly wave stupid little white flags from their well entrenched positions."

War Won't Save Our Economy This Time

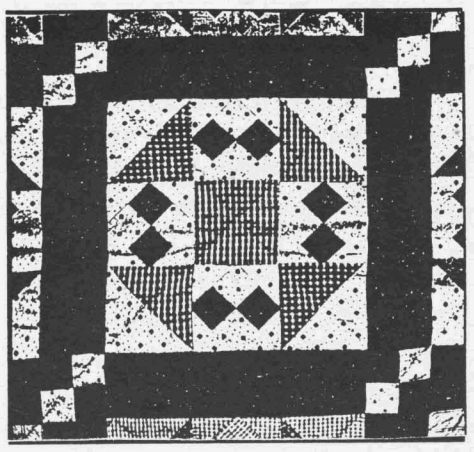
Rep. Henry Gonzalez

When a country in the midst of a war situation can show the men of money that it's stable, that if they put their money in that it's going to be taken care of, that's where the money is going to go. We attracted High reserves at the time of WW II & ended up with the biggest gold (so called) reserves ever. The reason was that the money was coming here for a safe haven. One interesting factor up to now in our involvement in the Gulf War is that you have the opposite, money isn't coming.

The Washington Post for Tuesday, January 15th had this article in the business section entitled "Taiwan cuts holdings in U.S. Banks - 35 billion shifted, Recession fear sighted". "Taiwan, holder of one of the largest foreign reserves, has cut most of its holdings in U.S. commercial banks because it fears the banks could rail in a economic recession prolonged by a Persian Gulf War, Central Bank officials said today." Then in the third to the last paragraph, "There is no evidence that Taiwan's attitude is spreading to other Asian economic power houses. Indeed, Japan's leading financial daily reported today that major Japanese banks have decided to funnel 10 billion dollars to the U.S. branches by the end of January in the event of a Gulf War, but hen it goes on to say why. The amount is twice the normal monthly injection, the newspaper reported. It is based on the assumption that war may make it difficult for banks to raise funds in the U.S. market."

"Taiwan has cut most of its holdings in U.S. commercial banks because it fears the banks could rail in a economic recession prolonged by a Persian Gulf War . . ."

Given that plus the disarray in our domestic/financial structure you can see why it is that I consider this to be the most critical of all issues.



Patchworks

Thomas Mitchell Freeman

With these words, I am composing my ninth monthly column for *Works in Progress*. I have been writing for the paper and have been a member of the editorial board since June, 1990. Our paper is owned by no one; it exists to provide the community with visions and opinions that our well-financed mass media monopoly chooses to ignore, or misconstrues. The unifying concept which guides our work is a fundamental belief that, as activists, we need to communicate with each other while educating ourselves and the larger public. To accomplish this, we pursue such idealistic ideas as world peace, worker solidarity and union organizing, economic democracy, gay rights, human rights, differently-abled access in employment and public accommodations, environmental protection, race and gender equality, dismantling the Military Industrial Complex and reinvesting those resources in our own social infrastructure.

Community members continually tell us how much they appreciate Works in Progress, how important it is to the progressive community. The positive comments has been thrilling for our small collective who work diligently each month to produce the paper you are now reading. However, spoken words of encouragement are not enough. This paper needs committed support in the form of monetary contributions, articles submissions, subscriptions, letters, and volunteers.

The folks who produce this paper are volunteers. Currently, nobody who works on the paper is financially compensated. The all night marathon sessions in front of computer screens, laying copy out on a production table, proof-reading, editing, etc., is done because we share the dream and hope for a more just tomorrow. By the time the paper goes to press, we are usually exhausted, but we immediately begin distribution throughout the county. Then we begin the whole process once again. It's both tiring and exhilarating. However, we cannot continue to hold our breaths and hope that enough money trickles in by the printing date, or expect that one of us will be able to write a personal check in anticipation of reimbursement. None of us make a lot of money. Some of us aren't even working, but are donating our time to the paper and the cause.

In Memorium of Gregory Levey, age 30, who died in Amherst, Masssachusetts on President's Day, February 18, 1991 by self-immolation in response to the horrors of the Persian Gulf War; we extend our sympathy to his father, Robert Levey, mother, Charlotte Levey, and step-mother, Ellen Goodman. We share in the spirit of the vigils of the people of Amherst and surrounding communities.

Community Support Vital to *Works In Progress* and TESC

Works in Progress started as an eight page preview issue in May, 1990. The "debut" issue which came out in June jumped to twelve pages. Soon after, we increased to 16 pages where we remain today, except for one month when we actually published a 20 pager! For many months we have printed subscription forms and asked readers to send money. The response has not been overwhelming. Each month it takes $400 - $450 to publish this paper. This includes postage expense, which was just increased, to mail out subscriptions. Although the Thurston County Rainbow Coalition created and sponsors this paper, we are required to be self-supporting. We currently have approximately 70 subscribers. We need many more. Please, if you haven't already subscribed, do so today. If you pick up the paper anyway, consider having it sent to someone who can't get it. Or, subscribe and request that we not mail your copies to you. That saves postage and allows us to invest the entire $25 in the actual production of the paper.

We need those people who believe in the paper to send cash donations each month. One local labor activist told me that he decided that if he could afford to subscribe to the Gannett *Olympian*, he certainly could send the same dollar amount to a struggling community newspaper which reflects his values. He has already sent us half the amount the *Olympian* receives from him annually and has pledged to send the other half as well. Just think how significant it would be if more people did the same thing.

Works in Progress needs more advertisers. If you own a business, take out an ad. With over 3,000 copies printed each month, the paper provides a great vehicle for businesses to reach a wide group of socially conscious individuals. The rates are cheap and the benefits to the paper and the businesses are priceless. Readers, be sure to patronize our advertisers. Let them know that you appreciate their support of *Works in Progress*. Prove to them that their investment is a wise one. I envision our paper as a resource for discovering where the progressive businesses are in our community, so we can support those who share our values and commitment for social justice.

Unions need to advertise regularly. We are indebted to the Washington Federation of State Employees local 443 who have provided us with a regular income source each month. Other progressive unions need to follow WFSE's example and financially support *WIP*. Eventually, we hope to switch to a union printer but we need the financial support of labor unions if we hope to raise enough money to pay for the higher printing costs.

Community members continually tell us how much they appreciate Works in Progress . . . The positive comments have been thrilling for our small collective who work diligently each month to produce the paper you are now reading.

Although our volunteers bring diverse talents to the paper, we are lacking an advertising representative to help us expand our base. If you are interested, and are willing to commit to the project on a sustaining basis, we'd like to hear from you. The editorial board has agreed that a commission should be paid for selling advertising. If you are interested, please call me at 943-1810, or Sylvia Smith at 459-3625. Also, if you have any fundraising ideas, and are interested in raising money for the paper, please call us.

We need you. If you enjoy writing, please submit materials. We need more letters! Letters are a great tool for opening dialogue and engaging readership in issues from differing perspectives. Please write us at Works in Progress, C/O PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507.

TESC Victimized by Anti-Peace Patriotism

As you no doubt already know, The Evergreen State College has been unjustly identified as being responsible for the sit-in at the State House Chambers in January. It seems that everyday, another "patriotic American" is writing to the Olympian demanding that funding be cut and that those Evergreen faculty "responsible" for the actions in the House be fired. It seems that a new McCarthyism is rearing it's ugly head in our community and it's focusing on TESC. As a graduate of the college, I am frustrated by the lies the press has created about the peace/anti-war activists. They were not a mob. Many who entered the chambers thought that they had been invited in. Those who stayed the night respected the facility and took care to keep things in order for the legislators when the session resumed the next morning. The infamous faculty "standing on a desktop" did so to remind people not to destroy anything, and to remain peaceful. The calls for retribution are nothing more than a reactionary, McCarthy-like totalitarianism against an institution of academic excellence and achievement. Colleges are by their very nature political institutions and have and will continue to inspire political activism and dissent. This is the inherent nature of well-rounded liberal arts education.

The legislature needs to hear from Evergreen supporters, particularly constituents of Representatives Rose Bowman and Bill Brumsickle and Senator Brad Owen. Let them know you support Evergreen, that you are proud of the institution and that you want full funding for its programs. You can leave a message for your legislators by calling the legislative hotline at 1-800-562-6000. Operators are available to take your comments Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.; Saturdays 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Special alert: Express support for the Rosalie Gittings Labor Education and Research Center at TESC. Some senators have suggested that funding be eliminated for the labor center. Your letters and phone calls are needed in support of this vital labor history and cultural center.

Tom Freeman is proud to be associated with Works in Progress and Evergreen . He is currently a graduate student in Public Administration at TESC and stressed out by work and school and misses doing his radio show.

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Tacoma Morning News Tribune

Reporters Fight for Their Rights

Pacific Northwest Newspaper Guild, Local 82

Sandy Nelson used to be education reporter for the Tacoma Morning News Tribune. She is now a night copy editor. It is not her choice.

Debbie Abe, minority-affairs reporter for the MNT, wanted to help in putting out a monthly community newsletter called Asian Forum. She hasn't. It is not her choice.

They believe time away from the job is their own and, as long as it doesn't interfere with their work, it's none of the employer's business.

Q: What do these two cases have in common?

A: They are both unilateral enforcements of a proposed code of ethics Tacoma management has put on the table but which has not been resolved through collective bargaining. And they both form the basis of an unfair labor-practice charge the Pacific Northwest Newspaper Guild has lodged with the National Labor Relations Board.

Beyond the immediate labor-management skirmish line, the case poses basic questions: 1) At what point does an outside activity skew an inside job? 2) Who determines whether there's a conflict of interest at a newspaper in the absence of a bilateral agreement? 3) How much time of a newspaper employee's 24 hours does a publisher "own"?

The answer to No. 1 seems to be whenever management says it does. The answer to No. 2 was to have been, in the short run, the regional office of the NLRB. But that agency dismissed the complaint in late October, and the Guild is now appealing it at the national level.

Nelson and Abe can supply the answer to No. 3 themselves: They believe time away from the job is their own and, as long as it doesn't interfere with their work, it's none of the employer's business. The Guild agrees.

The Guild's stand goes beyond the particulars of either the Nelson or the Abe case.

"Some publishers, if they could, would like to control an employee's hours away from work as well as their time on the job," say PNNG Administrative Officer Art Joyner. "No way."

I keep telling management at the bargaining table, people have their own lives to lead once they're out of the workplace. The Newspaper Guild's U.S. model contract says it all: 'Employees shall be free to engage in any activities outside of working hours.' It's short and simple."

The Nelson case in particular has fueled a growing debate in Puget Sound media and civil-rights circles ever since her abrupt transfer on Aug. 15.

Until then and for three years previously, Nelson, 33, had been covering the Tacoma education beat. According to her performance evaluation of January 1990, she was "excellent" in that job and was given commensurate raises. She has been with the paper 10 years.

But Nelson was, and is, an activist - in the Guild, in radical politics, in civic affairs, in gay and lesbian rights and in the social-justice movement.

Specifically, she spent many off-hours in the past year on behalf of a Tacoma ballot initiative to restore sexual anti-discrimination language to a city ordinance. If voters had passed it, the law, titled Proposition One, would have made it illegal to bar anyone from renting or buying a home, or being denied employment, because of real or perceived sexual preference.

As it was, the proposition went down to defeat in the Nov. 6 elections. But that's beside the point.

Nelson's activities apparently had caused no great concern with her bosses at the newspaper, according to her sworn affidavit accompanying the NLRB complaint. "They were discussed and known by current management when I interviewed in 1986," she said, referring to her rehire following the McClatchy-chain takeover, which abrogated the Guild contract of more than 40 years with the News Tribune.

Nelson even got management permission to rearrange her work schedule so she could participate in a "Women of Vision" U.S.-Soviet woman's conference held in Tacoma July 23-27 in conjunction with the Goodwill Games.

In a media fact sheet announcing the conference, delegate nelson described herself merely as a "reporter, Tacoma" along with "organizer for Tacoma Radical Women (socialist-feminist organization); active on "Committee to Protect Tacoma Human Rights" and a "longtime abortion-rights advocate".

Still no problem -- until an MNT story, written by another reporter on the eve of the conference, unmasked Nelson as "Morning News Tribune reporter."

Three weeks later, she was called to a meeting with Managing Editor Norm Bell and Assistant Managing Editor Jan Brandt and told her identification -- and presumed "exposure" -- as an MNT reporter meant she could no longer cover education affairs. Instead, they said, she woul l have to go on the 3:30 p.m.-to midnight copy-desk shift, at least for the duration of the Proposition One campaign. Otherwise she could embarrass the newspaper, they told her.

The MNT has since appeared to soften its stand -- but with a catch. After Nov.6, Nelson's editors told her she could have her old beat back, but only if she would agree to give up her outside political activities.

Nelson didn't go for it. "It's non-negotiable as far as I'm concerned," she told an Executive Committee/ general membership meeting of the Local in Tacoma Nov. 14, "You don't compromise First Amendment rights."

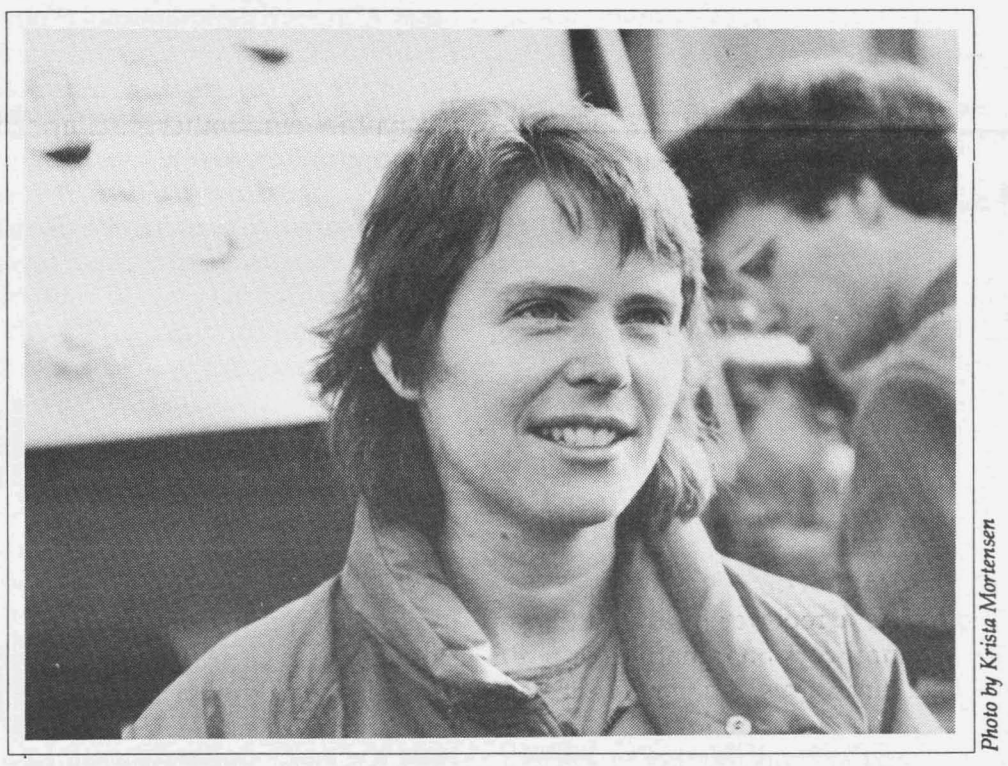

Photo by Krista Mortensen

At that meeting, the Local consented to spend what may come to $2,000 in appealing the regional NLRB dismissal at the Washington, D.C., level of the agency. But it also rejected Nelson's motion to immediately and officially publicize her case. The majority argued it was not solely a Nelson vs. MNT issue but rather was being fought on a broader bargaining-rights battlefield.

The Abe case may be less fraught with politics, partisanship and publicity, but the Guild sees it as no less a violation of the spirit of collective bargaining.

Abe, who had been asked to lend an editorial assist to the Asian Forum newsletter last spring, says at the time she was "aware generally" that the MNT had an ethics code on the bargaining table and "was also concerned that anything I did in connection with the newsletter would be perceived as improper by the Tribune."

So she took it up with her immediate supervisor, metro editor Gary Jasinek. According to her sworn testimony in an affidavit before the NLRB, Jasinek told her he "didn't think it was a very good idea but that he could not tell me not do it because the code of ethics had not yet been negotiated ."

At any rate, says Abe, who has been with the MNT four years, she didn't receive any word from on high to cease and desist from newsletter work. Accordingly, she told the Asian Forum to count on her help.

When in August the MNT-Nelson snit hit the fan over, in Abe's words, "community political activities that were distinct from her reporting beat," she thought to double-check her own position. This time, she went higher and asked Brandt if there was any problem. Brandt replied she didn't think so, but would Abe submit a memo with details?

"(Brandt) said I had been imprecise in my first description of the project," Abe says, "and that she would have said no then if she had known the extent of it."

Not content with that, Abe broached the subject again a day or so later, suggesting that "perhaps a more limited role, such as assisting with the writing, might be acceptable."

Brandt told Abe "the only thing I could do consistent with the Tribune's policy was to critique the newsletter after the others had produced it."

Abe didn't find that solution satisfactory either, but decided not to push it. Instead, she severed any connection with the Asian Forum newsletter.

"It was clear to me," she says, "that the Tribune had decided to apply its ethics proposal to our ac-

(Continued next page)

URGENT ACTION NEEDED!

Public Hearing: Monday, **Feb. 25** at the Westwater Inn, regarding the Northwest Power Planning Council's Draft Action Plan. NO NUKES! YES ALTERNATIVE ENERGY and ENERGY CONSERVATION. Your personal presence to show support is crucial. Contact Barbara for more info 956-9123.

(Reporters, cont.)

tivities regardless of its status in negotiations."

The absence or presence of an ethics code seems to differ according to management interpretation.

Brandt, on a call-in segment of the Mike Seigel Show on KING 1090 Radio the night of Oct. 17, treated the yet-to-be-negotiated code as having the force of law in the Nelson case, even while saying, "As Emmett (Murray, PNNG president, also a call-in guest) knows, we have an ethics code on the table that addresses this..."

Tacoma Guild unit chair Leslie Brown also saw something amiss in Brandt's logic.

"If the code is still on the bargaining table," Brown said some days later, "they have no right to unilaterally effect some condition of their own making without agreement for the party they're bargaining with -- the Guild."

(The Guild has been in continual bargaining for a new contract with the McClatchy MNT for the past four years. In August, the company said that unless an agreement was reached by Nov. 30, it would freeze wages.

"This is a difficult and complex issue," Brown continued, "one in which reasonable people can have differences of opinion. But we respect our members' intelligence enough to assume they can make an ethical choice in such a matter."

Others outside the MNT-Guild circuit have joined the fray. Addressing the Nelson issue in particular, Millie Quan, assistant managing editor for newsroom personnel at the Seattle Times, assured the Seattle Gay News that the Times already had a code of ethics regarding journalists as political activists.

Then Quan added, "I don't believe you even need a code of ethics in this situation. In order to maintain your objectivity, you cannot be politically involved. She (Nelson) just cannot do that.

"As a reporter of any kind, you cannot work on initiatives or political campaigns. We would not allow that. It's just a conflict of interest. People see you, they know you work for the paper..."

Quan is correct in at least one respect: The Times does have a code of ethics.

Drafted by management and meant to cover every conceivable quandary, it was promulgated unilaterally one day in the mid-1970's to an unprepared news staff. Objections were sharp, from the Guild and from individual reporters and editors.

One of the most forceful objectors was Mike Fancher, then a Guild reporter and now Times executive editor, as well as Quan's boss.

Fancher, a strong believer in an ethical code per se, nonetheless headed up a protest calling for a Guild voice in the new newsroom commandments. As a result, the Guild won a hand in crafting new language, and the code was somewhat modified. Other, minor modifications followed over the years.

The revised Times code, however, does not address what Quan claims it does. In the section on political activity most relevant to Nelson's predicament, the code states:

"If a staff member is a candidate for public office, whether the office is nonpartisan or unpaid, or is working, for pay or as a volunteer, in a political campaign or organization or has a close relative...in a political campaign or organization, the staff member should not make news judgements about such a campaign or organization. A staff member should advise his or her editor before reporting on or about campaigns or organizations if there is a possibility of a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest."

The Times' long-standing contract with the Guild is no help to Quan's argument, either. Article XII, "Outside Activities," in essence says employees can do anything on their own time provided the work isn't for a competitive medium, the employee doesn't exploit his/her connection with the publisher, and work done for any non-competitive employer isn't "to the embarrassment of the publisher businesswise."

That article, in fact, formed the basis of a precedent-setting arbitration in June 1982 which established that Guild members had the right to be politically active in their private lives.

A year before, Seattle Times columnist John Hinterburger had gotten on the ballot for commissioner of a suburban water district. Hinterburger said he ran for the nonpaid, nonpartisan post partly out of civic duty, partly to give him something to write about in this humor column.

But management didn't see anything funny. The top editor stepped in and said Hinterburger had to withdraw because it was against Times policy for newspeople to "run for office, whether for commissioner or mayor."

Hinterburger dutifully pulled out, albeit under protest.

But not in time to take his name off the ballot- he won in the primary election.

In the meantime the Guild grieved the issue and filed for arbitration.

In his June 30 ruling, arbitrator William Dorsey of Portland agreed with the Guild, calling Article XII of the contract "the collective-bargaining equivalent of the Bill of Rights." Further, he said, it "mandates that employees shall be free to engage in outside activities subject only to specific exceptions" -- and the Hinterburger case didn't fall under any of them.

It's moot now, but the pre-McClatchy Guild contract contained outside-activity language similar to that at the Times.

A supervisor admitted to Abe he couldn't order her not to work on the newsletter "because the code of ethics had not yet been negotiated."

Looking At The Shadows Of Our Fears

George Makuh

Fantasy and reality. A shadow world where the makers of shadows are small and insignificant creatures. When people walk behind the lights, the creatures scatter squeaking into corners. Why do they yield such power?

For several decades the shadow was communism. Twenty-four years ago I went over to South Vietnam to check those guys out. My job was advising Civilian Irregular Defense Group Soldiers. Many of them were communists or sympathizers. A lot of people over there were communist, but they just seemed like people trying to work something out. They were pretty rough but not as rough as the Americans were until we got tired of the whole business.

Later, while attending college, I discovered the true horror of communism. When various campus radicals harassed me with hours of discussion of theoretical minutiae. I still tremble at the thought of the excruciating boredom. My fear of communism dwindled to the point where, a side from occasionally having to go through the campus by ways to avoid another grueling chat, it occurred to me the only people afraid of communists, were nitwits, cowards and people with a plan.

But we have shifted smoothly to deal with a new shadow knocking on our door. Some guy in Far-offistan. And our transition shadow, drug gangs, disappeared from the news.

The fantasy seemed to be about latter day Huns. Incredible savages with the power to force us to purchase and smoke over priced drugs. They were destroying America. The greatest threat ever. But poof, gone.

I know a fifteen year old Crip . . . He now lives in jail, yet he is so shy it took him six weeks to get the courage to say hi to me.

Something is happening, though. Out of town Crips have been scrapping with local down town kids for at least two years. A friend of mine has the distinction of being attacked and beaten by both Crips and Bloods. I have observed a Crip successfully recruiting local kids.

I know a fifteen year old Crip so despicable he has supposedly been run out of Los Angeles and Dallas, Texas. He now lives in jail, yet he is so shy it took him six weeks to get the courage to say hi to me. Physically he is not imposing enough to frighten the children that played near him, and emotionally he most bears resemblance to a charming six year old. He is so messed up, I can't tell if he is stupid, smart or indifferent.

There are a lot of gang posers around Olympia and some real enough very dangerous guys affiliated with different name gangs, but this kid is the prototype. A drive-by rolling Crip from L.A. and he can barely get out his own way.

I think the killing in Tumwater is very instructive. The news media reported that there were gang members involved, but it was not a gang activity. Whites and Blacks were fighting each other, but it was an incident with no racial overtones.

Most unpopular news can be ignored because readers don't really want to hear or read it. Occasionally something happens so big it must be acknowledged, but then we say what we saw happen didn't happen just as we saw it. Within moments after an event, our personal and collective needs began to modify our memories. So we wander in fantasy and reality. We stink of fear.

George Makuh is a confidant for many children in the Olympia area. Thank goodness he's here.

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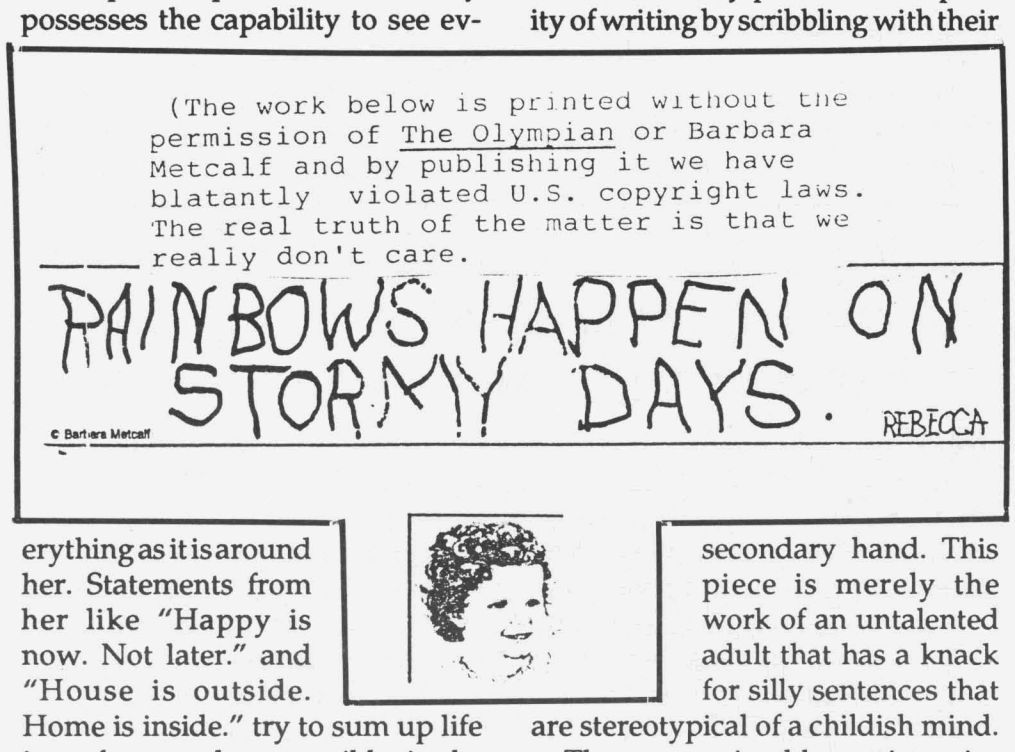
A Comment On "Rebecca"

Some readers may have noticed a "cartoon", or a sorry excuse for a cartoon in The Olympian, called "Rebecca". It is meant to represent the thoughts of a budding young child philosopher, who already possesses the capability to see everything as it is around her. Statements from her like "Happy is now. Not later." and "House is outside. Home is inside." try to sum up life in as few words as possible, in the tradition of Einstein, and other great minds who tried to capture the essence of life.


(The work below is printed without the permission of The Olympian or Barbara Metcalf and by publishing it we have blatantly violated U.S. copyright laws. The real truth of the matter is that we really don't care.
RAINBOWS HAPPEN ON STORMY DAYS.
REBECCA
© Barbara Metcalf

Realistically, it is highly improbable that a girl so young could have reached such maturity in thinking. The readers are also supposed to believe a young person wrote this just because the messages are written in scrawled handwriting. Anyone could easily produce that quality of writing by scribbling with their secondary hand. This piece is merely the work of an untalented adult that has a knack for silly sentences that are stereotypical of a childish mind.

There are noticeable consistencies in each cartoon: a small pre-printed picture to save the "artist" the trouble of drawing a new one everyday, her signature, which is also always the same, and the consistently fatuous and banal quality of the daily message. One wonders why such a repetitive product even needs to be protected by a copyright.

This work represents a new strain of cartoon art for the 90's: a cartoon with as little work put into it as possible, yet one that conveys more ideas than any single "Peanuts" strip could ever hope to. The person who discovered that even the totally untalented can be cartoonist, Barbara Metcalf, should be congratulated.

One wonders why such a repetitive product even needs to be protected by a copyright.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about "Rebecca" is the amount of "hate mail" it has been receiving in the editorial pages of The Olympian. People are making too big a deal out of this insignificant cartoon. They are merely upset because in "Rebecca" they see the inevitable decline in the quality and standards of traditional American cartoon art. Hey people! Lighten up! All good things come to and end sometime! You might as well learn to love "Rebecca" because it represents the mediocrity of cartoon art that will prevail in the future.

There are arguments for and against this contribution to the art world. It has filled a tremendous void in the life of the average American, even though it is a tremendous strain on one's common sense to believe that a four year old child is living her life by these thoughts and encouraging others to do the same. On the other hand it pushes aside other cartoon strips that might otherwise be in The Olympian's funnies. Hopefully Barbara Metcalf is making truckloads of money and becoming filthy rich so that she won't be forced to have a "real" job. ❐

Why This Path From Peace?

When I look at my country's recent actions taken in the Middle East, and its peoples support for these actions, I am deeply disturbed. The lies and hypocrisy, so blantantly unflinching at this time, make me angry, depressed, and frustrated. I am angry at our "leaders", and their refusal to find a peaceful solution to this crisis; depressed at the number of human beings that will die for a cause that is unnervingly vague; frustrated that my personal attempts towards change seem to fall on deaf and uncaring ears. The stonewalling rhetoric spewed forth by George Bush and Saddam Hussein has gotten the world commmunity nowhere in terms of a peaceful settlement. It seems that these two leaders were bent on war before it started, neither one wanting to appear as a wimp in front of the world. Wouldn't a true leader have risked losing face to mainain peace? The major media continually dwells on U.S. and coalition casualties and possible casualties. Aren't the people of Iraq as human as ourselves? Now that the war has started,, the Iraqi government lists 41 Iraqi civilians dead, and hundreds wounded as a result of U.S. bombing raids on the city of Baghdad. The media chooses to ignore the realities of war.

The lies and hypocrisy, so blantantly unflinching at this time, make me angry, depressed, and frustrated.

Instead the focus has been on the stunning technology used to destroy. Who cares if a bomb can be dropped down a fucking elevator shaft? Is this news? Human beings are in these buildings and they die when bombs fall on them. This is war, not how few missiles and bombs miss their targets, of the fascination with war technology. Now, with a ground war imminent, thousands of young soldiers on both sides will lose their precious lives fighting in the hot sands of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Once I must ask, "For what?" Our government attempts to portray the fighting as a personal attack on Saddam Hussein. One State Department official said, "we want to humiliate him and defeat him. We will treat him with no respect." How is killing innocent civilians going to humiliate Hussein? It should humiliate us. If he is still alive, we haven't defeated him at all, only killed those who had no real options. Every reason for war, in my opinion, is negated by government hypocrisy and lies. Gallup poll shows over eighty percent of Americans support this war. Why? I do not know. I can only hope that the stark reality of war reaches every citizen of this country, and that the masses must start clamoring for answers to questions that our government must begin to address. ❐

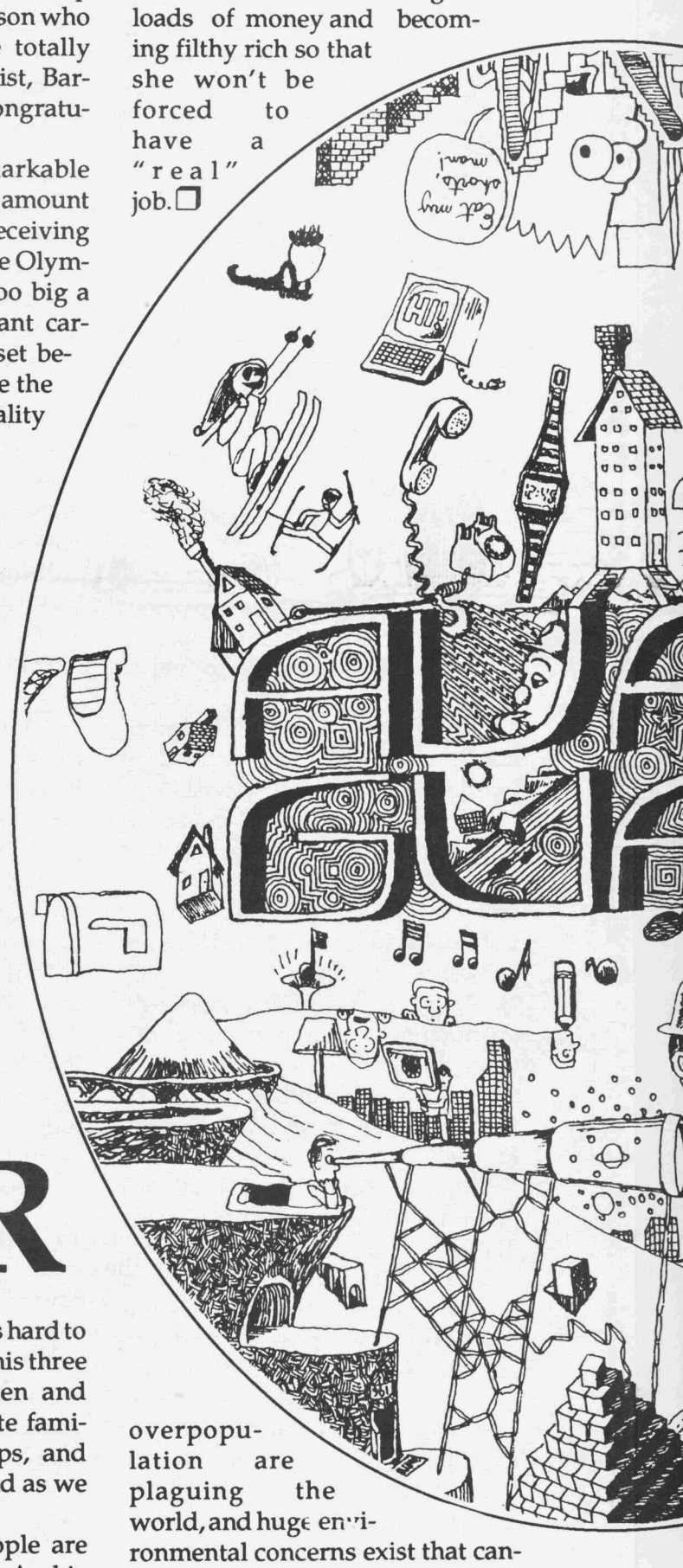
"Don't Forget! Draft Counselor, Glenn Anderson will be in Mr. Grant's Room Wednesday during Activity period."

WAR

It's such a small word. It's hard to imagine that the reality of this three letter word could kill men and women of all ages, separate families, demolish relationships, and change the face of the world as we know it.

As more and more people are being shipped off to Saudi Arabia the effects of his tiny word are becoming clearer. Is our present way of life worth fighting for or is change and adaptation inevitable?

Aren't there better things to do than kill? Aren't there infinitely many tasks that are in dire need of completion? Yes, there are more important problems. Homeless people fill the streets, famine and overpopulation are plaguing the world, and huge environmental concerns exist that can-



Too much time is spent warring and being so damn complicated . . .

not be ignored. Are all these problems so menial that they do not

Racism On The Home Front

What? Racism at CHS??? As I recall, there have been rather few white-supremacist skinheads roaming the halls lately, hardly any picketers carrying signs with defamatory slogans, and only a handful of attempts to nuke the ESL (English as a second language) room. No doubt these actions are the signatures of the racist, and we are relatively fortunate to be devoid of extremists at CHS. So technically, we don't have racism at CHS right? Wrong.

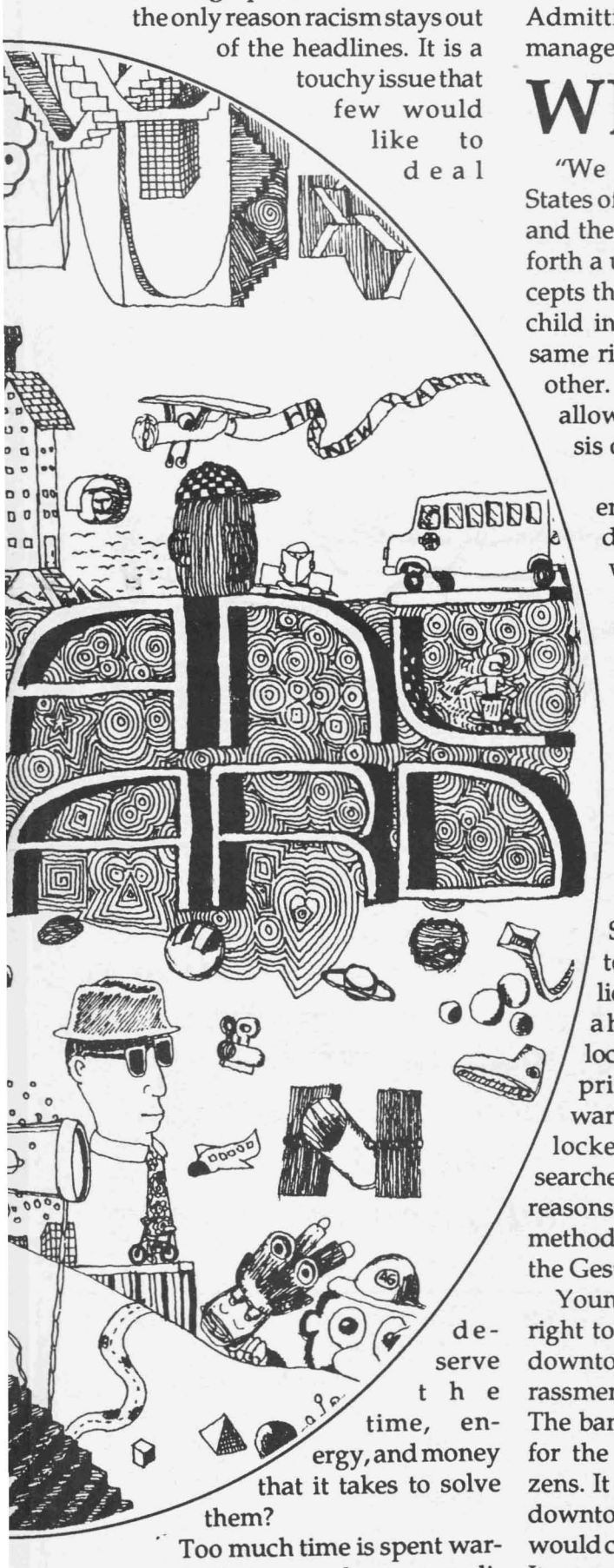
Lack of graphic evidence is not the only reason racism stays out of the headlines. It is a touchy issue that few would like to deal with. Whether we like it or not, the beg bad "R" word exists.

Racism does not have to be big to be bad. In fact it is the little things that hurt: the look of disgust, the stinging word that slips out from under our breath, the derogatory phrase accompanied by a sigh. Racism expressed in a subtle way is still readily picked up by those who are sensitive, those who have come to expect it.

Though occasionally funny for some, racial remarks drill deeply into the heart and hit home hard. Admittingly, one can somehow manage a weak smile when multitudes are laughing. But then again, what else can one do? Ask for an apology? All too often any attempts at reparation come in the form of affected sympathy or pretended sincerity.

To ask ourselves whether or not we are really racists is a hard question. Answering honestly is yet harder. All too often we will deny our racism because we truly and honestly think we aren't. Racism is a subliminal thing that has become so elementary to our thinking process. It is essentially second nature. Like fixing most bad habits, curing racism is not a simple task.

Half of the world's problems occur due to actions that took place before thought. The same is true of making racist statements. Being consciously aware of our thought and action, we can prevent all of the problems that racism creates. ❐



deserve the time, energy, and money that it takes to solve them?

Too much time is spent warring and being so damn complicated and angry that not even the crucially mundane gets done. If people do not divert their energies to earth and its inhabitants then there will be no planet left; no green blue oasis in an infinitely finite darkness. But then we need oil to protect our way of life, right? ❐

WE HAVE RIGHTS?

"We the people of the United States of America..." This statement and the document that follows set forth a unique example of the concepts that every man, woman, and child in the United States has the same rights and privileges as any other. The Constitution does not allow discrimination on the basis of sex, age, or heritage.

In reality, things are different. Many groups have been discriminated against and we, as "minors", have not escaped violations of our rights. The Fourteenth Amendment states that "All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside." If young people are full citizens of the United States, why are they subject to search and seizure on public property? Capital High has a history of searching students, lockers, automobiles, and other private property without a warrant. During a bomb threat, lockers were indiscriminately searched with no specific cause. The reasons are understandable, but the methods remind us of stories about the Gestapo and KGB.

Young people are also losing the right to peaceably assemble in the downtown area through police harassment and petty city ordinances. The ban on skateboarders was not for the "protection" of other citizens. It was to get the youth out of downtown so that older generations would come and spend their money. It was pure economic.

The rights of young citizens are being eroded by people who find their views and mannerisms too unsettling. Society is working to trample the ideas of young people because their message is something authority figures do not like to hear. They will hear our message.

The worst loss, however, is the deprivation of the right "to petition the government for a redress of grievances." Policy makers have stolen the rights of young people, including the right to make important changes which affect our lives. A large number of high school students pay taxes and get no say in how this money is spent. Taxation without representation is something our forefathers fought to abolish in the Revolutionary War, yet we still face this same problem.

Young people deserve the same treatment as all other citizens of the United States. We demand a voice in the country that we will lead in the future. We demand the rights guaranteed to us by the Constitution.

A large number of high school students pay taxes and get no say in how this money is spent.

Grades Don't Make The Grade

A popular question in all math classes is the one regarding the use of mathematics in everyday life. The same can be applied to what we have learned, or should have learned in our secondary education.

How well are we, as high school students, prepared for life after school? Are our classes training us to live full lives? Does our current grading system make us well rounded, worldly individuals, or does it merely reward those with the highest organizational skills?

These questions shed a dark shadow upon the competitive nature of public schooling as it exists today. Fierce competition for grades has made it necessary for the ambitious student to substitute shallow, finite memorization for a well thought out, deep understanding of important concepts.

Today's high school student has lost his or her sense of perspective. Each new idea has equal importance in the eyes of someone who must memorize everything for an upcoming test. The atomic weight of Einsteinium has the same significance as the main idea of our Constitution. This is the reason why Seniors seem so dense when quizzed about important issues facing them in the world. No one can be expected to remember any specific information that is administered in this way for any period of time.

Grades should be abolished. A new system should be instated that teaches them how to think (not what to think) instead of the memorization of assorted facts. Facts can always be looked up. If people are set in a non-competitive environment, and exposed to ideas and concepts, rather than facts and figures, they will want to learn. Both the students and society would benefit in the long run.

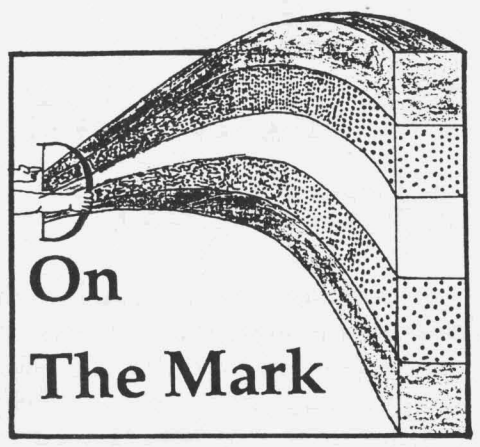
The preceding articles are excerpts from Avant-Guard, an alternative paper at Capital High School. This publication is not the official school paper, nor is it supported by the administration or the school district in any way. Since most readers are unfamiliar with Avant-Guard and its goals, an explanatory note follows.

This paper was created to give students an alternative to the official school paper, the Outlook. We are not trying to compete with them, or insult them. The two publications are different, and have different purposes. We want to be more than just a written reiteration of the morning announcements. We want to make you think, make you angry, make you wonder why. We want to be everything a school paper can't be (or shouldn't be.) We are the cure to apathy.

Originally, we had planned to be an underground paper. That didn't last. Now it is understood that we are an alternative paper. This journal is, and will continue to be, on the edge and controversial. Even our friends in the administration have been talking about us (as well as with us.) Our name is representative of what we stand for. You're right, we did spell it wrong, but we meant to.

We have a problem and you can help. Our budget for printing is not as large as we wish it was. If you can help us out with money, or know someone who can, contact us at the address below. Please help and make this paper what it deserves to be. Remember, democracy is not a spectator sport!

AVANT-GUARD
1206 Plymouth Court SW
Olympia, WA 98502-5809



LESSONS OF THE SOVIET EXPERIENCE

Dave Jette

In last month's column, we posed the question of the political relevance of Marxism after having had a look at its strengths and weaknesses at the philosophical level, that of worldviews. For many social activists, the relevance (or irrelevance) of Marxism is seen in its application in the Soviet Union, and we shall examine that experience in relationship to Marxist political theory.

. . . contrary to the propaganda both of the Soviet Union's proponents and of its pro-capitalist opponents, the Soviet Union as it developed under Stalin had nothing to do with Marxism.

As we have done all along, we use the term "classical Marxism" to describe the (claimed) application of Marxist theory to the Soviet Union. It is this interpretation of Marxism which our book ***Liberating Theory*** (Albert et al, South End Press, 1986) has so vehemently denounced, as being geared toward the interests of a new exploiting class, the coordinator class. However, while agreeing with this fundamental criticism of "classical Marxism", we shall be developing a perhaps surprising interpretation of the Soviet experience: contrary to the propaganda both of the Soviet Union's proponents and of its pro-capitalist opponents, the Soviet Union as it developed under Stalin had nothing to do with Marxism.

Thus our question of the political relevance of Marxism will remain after this month's investigation of the lessons of the Soviet experience. While it is necessary first to dispose of the self-serving claim that the Soviet Union was guided by Marxism, we shall still have before us the question of whether Marxist theory actually can help us in working toward a truly liberated society. Next month's column will examine the case for answering this question positively.

The Rise Of Stalinism

In March of 1917, the Czarist regime was overthrown in Russia and replaced by a Provisional Government committed, in the service of the Russian capitalist class, to continuing the debilitating war against Germany. During the next several months a dual form of political power arose, based in "soviets" (councils) of workers, soldiers, and peasants (separately). The situation was highly unstable, and the Bolshevik Party was increasingly able to win control of the workers' and soldiers' soviets, through its slogan of "Bread, Peace, and Freedom". In November the Bolshevik Party led the urban masses in easily overthrowing the Provisional Government, and an ensuing congress of peasants' representatives quickly ratified this working-class revolution. With the momentous "October Revolution" (October, according to the calendar then in use) arose "classical Marxism".

The first years were extremely difficult for the new Bolshevik government. A vicious civil war with the forces of the old order followed the October Revolution. In order to end Russian participation in World War I, the Bolsheviks had to sign a grossly unfair peace treaty with Germany, but Russia then suffered military intervention in the civil war by the Allied countries, ostensively in order to maintain the Eastern Front against Germany. (The real purpose of this imperialist intervention, led by Britain and France, was of course to prevent the formation of a state upholding the interests of the working class. Just as now with Iraq, the major capitalist powers were united in trying to smash any threat to their exploitation of the rest of the world. The United States played a relatively minor part in the Allied intervention, mainly in Siberia.) The civil war finally wound down in 1920, and in the following year a liberalized rebuilding program, called the New Economic Policy, was embarked upon. Russia, it seemed, was at last able to implement Marxism in starting to build the emancipated society of the future.

What emerged from these terrible three years, however, was not the workers' state of traditional Marxism. The revolution took place in an overwhelmingly peasant society, and the Bolshevik Party couldn't naturally command the allegiance of the peasantry, as they could the working class. (This was seen, for example, in the elections to the Constituent Assembly of January 1918, in which the Bolsheviks took only a quarter of the seats. The Socialist Revolutionaries - the party of the peasantry - won a clear majority, and the response of the Bollshevik government was simply to dissolve the Assembly and go on governing as before.) The working class was decimated in World War I and, especially, in the ensuing civil war, while the Bolshevik Party found itself alone and isolated in governing the new society. There were certainly objective reasons for this turn of events, but there were also subjective decisions made by the Bolsheviks which led to a one-party dictatorship *over* (rather than *by*) the working class. Lenin, who alone might have turned the situation around in favor of a democratic state led by the working class, was incapacitated by a stroke in 1922 and finally died in early 1924.

What was being constructed in the Soviet Union in the 1920's was not socialism, conceived of by traditional Marxism as being a transitional period between capitalism and communism during which the masses would increasingly gain direct control over all aspects of society. Rather, it remained a one-party dictatorship under which the coordinator class instead steadily gained control of the state. Within the Bolshevik Party, Stalin defeated his opponents of the Right (Bukharin) and of the Left (Trotsky), and by 1929 he and his political grouping held uncontested power in the Soviet Union. Through massive political purges and forced collectivization of the countryside, Stalin physically eliminated all opposition - especially from the working class - and set about constructing an industrialized economy appropriate to the needs of the new ruling class. "Classical Marxism" had finally come into its own.

"Classical Marxism"

Exploiting economic classes always seek to cover up the reality of their control of society. This is certainly true in our own country, with its formal "democracy" which prevents the great majority of people from contesting control over their own lives. In the Soviet Union with the rise of Stalin, the coordinator class assumed the cloak of Marxism to justify their needs of the moment. This was especially useful on an international scale, for they were thereby able to deceive into supporting themselves, people all over the world seeking an end to the barbarity of capitalism. While most of the coordinator class in the capitalist countries continued to support the existing order, some representatives of this class seized upon the rhetoric of "classical Marxism" to build political movements which served to increase their share of the capitalist pie. (This was fairly successful in Western Europe, which developed politically powerful Communist Parties; in the United States, the viciously suppressed Communist Party was composed more of middle-class people than of the working class.)

Through massive political purges and forced collectivization of the countryside, Stalin physically eliminated all opposition - especially from the working class . . .

Thus, both within and outside of the Soviet Union, there developed a solid material basis for a new ideology serving the needs of the coordinator class and masquerading as Marxism. This ideology was built upon the particular political forms taken in Russia following the October Revolution, and promoted as being the universally valid application of Marxist theory. Lenin was deified so that the Stalinists could invoke his name in their creation, "Marxism-Leninism". Gone was any sort of control of society from below, any public debate, any right to free association. The dictatorship of the coordinator class brooked no ideological challenge to its rule, and made "classical Marxism" into a catechism. This is seen even recently in the following quotations from *Lenin and the World Revolutionary Process*, written in 1980 by Boris Ponomarev, then the Soviet Communist Party's foremost theoretician:

> "Everything the Soviet Union and the fraternal countries have achieved would have been inconceivable without the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary theory... There is no other theory confirmed by the practice of many decades for refashioning the world in the interests of the working people and for the building of socialism ... The socialist countries are free of economic crises, inflation, unemployment, and other vices of capitalism. All this was achieved on the road charted by Marxism-Leninism ... To assert that Marxism-Leninism has grown outdated is to assert the invalidity of the general principles underlying the organization of the economic and all other aspects of the life of socialist society ... The experience of existing socialism is convincing confirmation of the basic laws and principles of building and developing a socialist society."

and

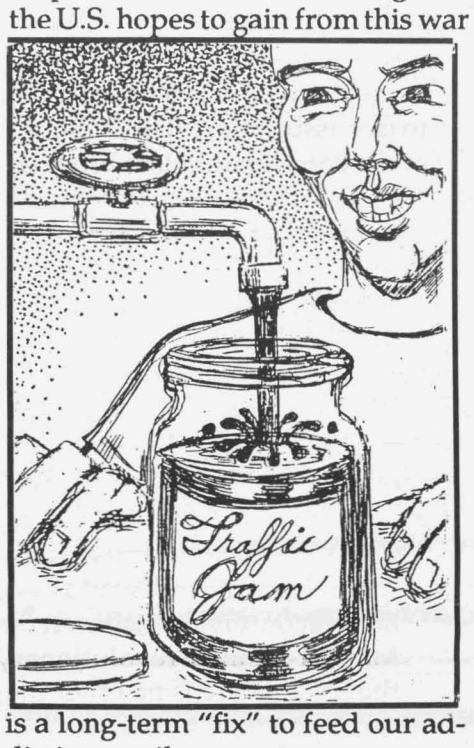
> "Marxist-Leninist theory is an integral teaching `closed' to alien and unscientific concepts and views. Not one basic premise, not one essential part can be eliminated from it without departing from the objec-

(Continued next page)

The Persian Gulf War and a Cure for Traffic Jams

By David Zink

One of the primary reasons (arguably, *the* primary reason) for U.S. involvement in the war in the Persian Gulf region is this country's precarious dependence upon cheap oil. The multi-national petroleum industry, which has tremendous influence upon the government, felt threatened by Iraq's grabbing of the Kuwaiti oil patch, and the government, again, went to the defense of corporate interests. One thing that the U.S. hopes to gain from this war



is a long-term "fix" to feed our addiction to oil.

One wonders how long this fix will last. The world supply of cheap oil is running low. What will be the next crisis that our addiction pushes us into? Environmental damage on the home front, such as oil spills is another likely result.

About ten years ago, a series of decisions was initiated that put the brakes on progress our country had been making toward utilization of alternative, renewable energy sources, such as solar- and wind-generated electricity. Soon after Reagan moved in, he removed the solar panels from the White House, then proceeded to cut funding for alternative energy research that was begun during the Carter years. Today, oil is even more the "lifeblood" of our economy.

Irag, up to this time, has been a soft opponent. Our blistering attack on Baghdad has met very little resistance. This has led to a rallying around the flag and growing public support, up from the 50-50 levels at the onset of the war. But, this war is not over yet. Even in this "popular" war, there have been many traffic-stopping demonstrations, government building ocupations, and other actions. As the conflict goes into the ground war phase and the body count rises, popular opposition will also rise.

The political situation in the Middle East, and in OPEC nations in general, is typically unstable. Our present ally may be next year's adversary. If we as a nation do not wean ourselves off oil, we will continue to be either at the mercy of, or at war with, future Saddam Husseins. The next conflict may not go so well for the U.S. We cannot count on unified United Nations support for future war actions. We *can* expect more opposition in the next war of this type.

Clearly, the time is ripe to take measures to reduce our over-dependence on this limited resource, and stop acting as if its infinite. Simply put, we must stop wasting oil!

Now, lets bring this idea back home. What can *we* do, right here?

Soon after Reagan moved in, he removed the solar panels from the White House, then proceeded to cut funding for alternative energy research . . .

Perhaps the greatest single cause of waste petroleum is our transportation system, and our reliance on the private auto. Witness the Seattle, Tacoma, and to a lesser extent Olympia, commuting situation. Most cars that are caught in the twice-daily traffic jams contain one person: an angry and frustrated driver. In Los Angeles, drivers use one of every four gallons simply idling their cars in traffic jams, and Puget Sounders can't be much better. According to the U.S. EPA, half the cancer incidence caused by air pollution is coming from cars. In the U.S., cars are the biggest source of greenhouse gases. They emit one-third of the carbon dioxide. Autos are the source of one-third of nitrogen dioxide emissions, a major precursor of acid rain which is killing lakes and trees. Car air-conditioners are the leading source of the ozone-layer destroying chlorofluorocarbons. And, oil, gasoline, and other automotive chemical run-off from road and parking lot surfaces pollutes our surface waters. The main reason for this gridlock and air pollution is the lack of a convenient and cheap alternative.

There is a healthier alternative to this. One thing we can do is to start construction of a light-rail commuter train system, running at least from Everett to Olympia. Is there sufficient demand to justify the expense? Ask commuters! You will find many that would be very receptive to the idea. Basically, after you drive from Tacoma to Seattle and back a dozen or so times, and cope with the traffic jams, the novelty wears off. America's "love affair" with the car? Nonsense! Lack of a viable alternative is a miserable excuse for any love affair: there should be some choice.

To be successful, the commuter train system would have to be convenient. This means many stations, closely tied to park-and-rides (people would still need to get to the stations somehow), and frequent departures. The system should be as bicycle-compatible as possible, the trains having easy-use bike stow compartments, and streets and roads having wide and safe bike lanes. Stations should have facilities to secure bikes as well as park cars. And the trains must utilize the cleanest, least-polluting technology available.

Usage of the system would generate enough revenue to pay for the system relatively soon. It could be the first link of, and tie into, eventual passenger rail service running from Vancouver, BC to Portland and beyond. Construction, maintenance, and operation would provide a lot of jobs.

At this point, an initiative campaign would help define the level of popular support for light rail in the Puget Sound region of the I-5 corridor.

There is likely to be some opposition to the commuter train idea. We can expect major financing of this opposition to come from the oil and automotive corporations, who have a history of hostility to mass public transportation. The story of National City Lines, in which the public transit system of Los Angeles was systematically bought up and destroyed by a group of petroleum, rubber, and automotive corporations to clear the way for freeways (and huge profits for the consortium's members) is familiar to many as a classic example of corporate greed running counter to the public interest.

Opposition or not, the time has come to get serious on this issue. Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it. It is too late to prevent this war, it is *not* too late to prevent the next "oil war" !

Dave Zink is a state worker and a community activist.

(Lessons cont.)

> tive truth. Conversely, not one alien concept or principle may be added to it without destroying its integrity and scientific nature."

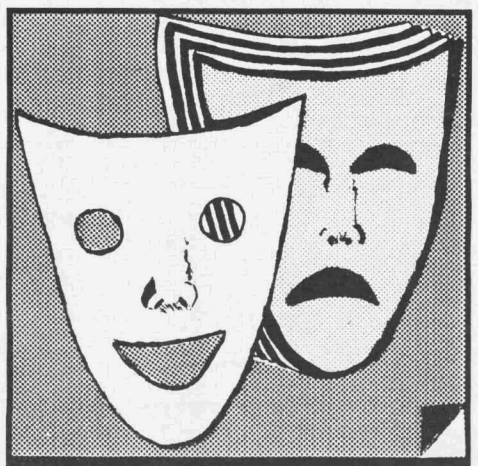
Lessons Of "Classical Marxism"

The above quotations were given in an article entitled "The Unquiet Passing of Marxism-Leninism" by Irwin Silber in the December 1990 issue of *Crossroads*. (This new magazine, which seeks to give voice to a broad range of opinion in reconstructing the Marxist worldview and developing strategies for progressive social change, is highly recommended. An eleven-issue subscription to *Crossroads* costs $24; their address is P.O. Box 2809, Oakland, CA 94609.) Silber quite properly characterizes these quotations as "Orwellian commentaries [which] make embarrassing reading today", and his conclusion is to completely reject "Marxism-Leninism". But what is especially interesting here is that, not so very long ago, the author was a leader in a (now-defunct) national Left organization which tried to outdo the Communist Party in its subservience to the Soviet Union, in rigorously upholding "classical Marxism" and thereby defending what it called "really existing socialism" against any Marxists (especially from the Maoist tradition) who dared to point out that something was fundamentally wrong. Now the monstrous house of cards has collapsed, and genuine revolutionaries like Silber are scrambling to reconstruct Marxism as what it was always intended to be, a theory and practice serving the cause of human liberation.

It is very good, of course, that many of those who blithely accepted "classical Marxism" in order to defend "really existing socialism" have seen the light and have now embarked upon applying Marxism in a socially progressive manner. But non-Marxist progressive activists must be naturally suspicious: if Marxism is so good, so scientific, how come these people have come around only now that their mainstay, the Soviet Union, has collapsed of its own inherent contradictions? Have they really grasped the lessons of the Soviet experience?

Our response must be: regardless of how far these former supporters of "classical Marxism" have come, and how far they may have yet to go, the fact is that many Marxists have all along rejected "really existing socialism" as being nothing but a sham application of Marxist theory. They have long ago drawn the conclusion that it is impossible to advance to the liberated communist society envisioned by Marx and Engels, through a one-party dictatorship which tightly controls the whole material and intellectual life of society. Seeing what has been going on in the Soviet Union for these many decades, they have rejected "classical Marxism" in favor of a genuine Marxism which does indeed promote the direct control of all aspects of society by the people themselves. In this view, the fundamental lesson of the Soviet experience is rejection not of Marxism but rather of its perversion, "classical Marxism". Next month we shall examine the case for this positive view of Marxism.

Dave, a member of the National Committee for Independent Political Action, is a regular columnist for WIP.



NO NEW WORLD ORDER HERE . . .

by Ron Jacobs

"Whatever the U.S. government controls, there injustice to dark races prevails." -- Lewis Douglass, son of abolitionist Frederick Douglass and a member of the Massachusetts 54th Infantry Regiment in the Civil War.

George Bush's denial of a systemic racist design in a U.S. military force in the Persian Gulf composed of over 35% people of color (100,000 Latinos and 125,000 Black troops - *Commentator*, Jan. 1991) is representative of his government's view on race issues. After all, according to his way of thinking, equal opportunity should start at the employment office, not at birth. What this means, in essence, is that the economic and social racism of American society has nothing to do with the lack of opportunities afforded people of color. In effect, such a belief is a denial of a fundamental reality. It is a reality which imprisons African-American men at a rate over four times that of black South Africans, and kills them at a rate equal or greater than the mortality rate in Bangladesh. It is a reality that kills Arab children with weapons of mass destruction, while Black infants in Seattle, Oakland, CA., and a half dozen other U.S. cities die at rates higher than the rest of the industrialized world.

It will take more than affirmative action laws -- which only redistribute inequality anyhow -- to change this. A genuine transformation needs to occur. Incorporation into the present system won't provide real change, but changing the system will. As a beginning, profits from businesses in non-white neighborhoods should remain in those districts. Financial control translates into power. Like the "third world" overseas, it is the removal of resources and profits from their source and into the coffers of the transnational corporations which perpetuates and exacerbates the inequalities which currently exist. The Adhoc African-American Coalition Against U.S. Intervention put it this way: "Our fight is at home, not in the Middle East."

It's a fight against a system which perpetuates economic and social inequities and then blames the victims of those inequalities for its shortcomings. Ours is a culture where poor non-whites are considered below society -- an "underclass"; where suburban white youth are led to fear black males and denigrate black women, yet not consider themselves racist. Their justification for such actions is that they are somehow better, not by virtue of skin color like their nazi skinhead cousins profess, but because they come from a better class of people. In other words, they have more money and, in general, a better chance of making more as adults.

With the assistance of the corporate media, "law and order" is defined as locking up people of color not because they are *not* white, but because they are "criminals". Of course, the economic and social causes of their illegal actions are ignored. One example of just such a dynamic can be found in the "war on drugs". Although over 70% of drug arrests are of white people, the majority of drug offenders portrayed on television and in the print media are black or Latino. Needless to say, the majority of those in prisons for drug offenses are also non-white. Even *USA Today*, in a front page story a few weeks ago, was forced to admit that the "war on drugs" is primarily a war against poor people of color. Yet Bush has requested an almost 11 billion dollar increase in that war -- most of it for prisons and police.

In the wake of the concern expressed by some politicians and community leaders over the disproportionate number of non-white infantry personnel in the Middle East, certain liberal commentators are urging passage of civil rights bills defeated in the last few years. If we remember, there were many such bills passed during the Vietnam war. And for what? The laws which made any difference have since been repealed, rewritten, or just plain rejected, and, consequently, left most people of color in a worse place economically and socially than before. Besides, who wants a society where the only way to achieve equality is by joining its killing machine? The ultimate irony of such a trade-off might be that the only true equality the poor and non-white in our country may ever know is through their deaths.

African-American Coalition Against U.S. Intervention - (718)-935-1116.

Ron Jacobs is a member of both the Olympia Anti-Intervention Coalition

It is a reality that kills Arab children with weapons of mass destruction, while Black infants in Seattle, Oakland, CA., and a half dozen other U.S. cities die at rates higher than the rest of the industrialized world.

You Had The Last Word

Lars Wullf

To everyone who stood by cheering and clapping as they arrested us, to whomever replaced the yellow ribbons on the police cars with black ones, to everyone who sat down in the street, blocking their way: cheers. You took the last word away from the state. You told everyone that this was our show from start to finish, that we - not the cops and not the government were setting the terms.

To any among us who might be looking to throw down with the cops: confrontation is better than submission, but conversion is better than either. We know that solders are going AWOL and applying for C.O. status. How many cops already silently question the wisdom of this war? How many may yet change their minds? The U.S. military has avoided a draft to deprive those most likely to actively oppose the war - the young - of the personal stake in peace which they had during the Vietnam War: their lives. We shouldn't be less clever than the Pentagon.

We shouldn't give the cops a personal stake in opposing the Peace Movement. We can oppose the government and its policies without seeking to physically intimidate and threaten the cops.

I'm not telling anyone they should turn the other cheek. What you do when the shit hits the fan is for you to decide. But I am arguing that if things get rough, we should make sure it was not we who got rough first. Maybe the pay off will be seeing some cops stand up to oppose the war. Maybe not. At least we'll know we're not gangsters.

Lars Wulff was one of the 14 arrested at the Capitol, February 16th and is very active in OAIC.

One Soldier's Truth

This letter is from a G.I. stationed in Saudi Arabia, who must remain anonymous, to an army buddy who is now in civilian life. This letter was a surprise because it was a response to a letter designed to be a macho pep talk to a soldier that used to be a conservative, republican gung-ho guy. Below is the soldier's reply.

Is this the friend I remember? We are solidly behind you guys? Kick his ass?

Here we go! Is it our job to act as the world's police and moral force? These dictators I agree are "SOBs". If so, there are dozens more to go. Somehow I don't think that's the reason we are over here. Are we here because Hussein poses a threat to our security because of a future capability? If that is the case, every country in the world could be put into the category of "future threat". Are we here because of the threat to our "way of life" because of a strangle hold "on the world's oil"? Why are fuel prices falling then? Where is the rationing? Where is the damage to our economy? Oil, as you know, is something that must be given up within the next 30 years or the patient "earth" will die. No. We are here for two reasons.

1. The powerful oil companies and industry were threatened.

2. Our president over-reacted and backed himself into a corner from which he can't escape unless its over American bodies.

I'm here because I'm a soldier, it's what I do. I'm also an American and this Republican Administration will be removed from the scene politically. America will not stand for the blood bath that's coming. Oh, we'll kick his ass. The fire power we have is incredible. But again we are **wrong**. I hope it is not a mistake our blood is written in.

...Well, better go. Take Care.

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Behind The Occupation Of The Legislature

by Scott A. Douglas

There has been much criticism, both from the media and from the legislature of the state of Washington, of the recent demonstration staged on the floor of the House of Representatives. Many falsehoods have been spread about the nature and events of the demonstration, and attempts have been made to portray the demonstrators as a marauding group of unruly adolescents. In fact, the action was nonviolent in nature and execution, was carried out by several thousand members of the Washington populace, and was rooted in very real and well founded social discontent. It is imperative that members of this legislature, no matter how opposed to the form which this demonstration took, ask themselves what is causing such social unrest.

It is imperative that members of this legislature, no matter how opposed to the form which this demonstration took, ask themselves what is causing such social unrest.

There has yet to be any comment as to the cause of this demonstration. There has been naught but criticism of the action, and it is still being erroneously viewed as an isolated incident.

A demonstration of this type in the capitol is unprecedented in this state, if not in the nation. Should this not raise a red flag to both the government and the community that social frustration and unrest has reached a state so critical as to warrant an action so audacious?

The current state of the nation is grave: soaring homicide rates broke records in every major American city in 1989 and 1990, and there is every indication that this pattern will continue. We have the world's highest incarceration rate, despite an overall decline in crime, and our overcrowded jail system is creating hardened criminals, not rehabilitated and productive people. Our government's response to this crisis is to maintain the policies which are precipitating social disaster.

We are the most indebted nation on the planet, owing countless billions both to ourselves and to foreign governments, and our government's response is the Keating Five and Neil Bush.

Our environment is deteriorating at an incredible pace, yet we still subsidize with public funds the exportation of our natural resources, and stymie most serious environmental legislation.

Hypocrisy Abroad

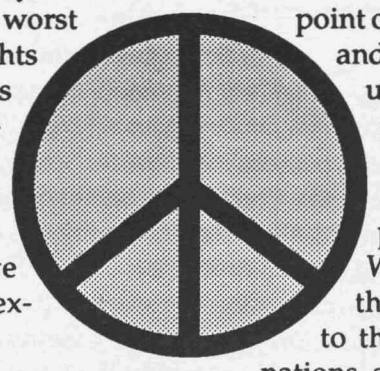
Our country's foreign policy is to sell arms to all comers, and to support brutal governments, regardless of ideology (witness dictatorial communist China and capitalist, supposedly democratic El Salvador) without regard to human rights. We are hated and vilified by citizens and governments of dozens of nations, and deservedly so.

In the face of all these problems, our government has chosen to lead us, with malice aforethought, into a war for oil, a war fought by an army 32% of whom are African-American. Yet this 32% is fighting in the name of a country whose life expectancy for African-American males is among the world's lowest, and they are commanded by the only president in U.S. history to have vetoed a civil rights bill.

We are engaged in a war where the specter of nuclear warfare has been raised to its most frightening levels since the Cuban missile crisis. The debate among the commanders of the war, as reported by National Public Radio, is not based on consideration of the potential for irreparable environmental and human carnage and the proliferation and usage of nuclear weapons, but solely on military strategem confined to the immediate crisis at hand.

The war is being fought, at the cost of thousands of lives, over viable access to oil reserves, and yet our administration has said not one word about conservation and alternative fuel sources, and has in fact slashed the alternative energy budget mercilessly.

There is every indication that this war has occurred with the intent and foreknowledge of the U.S. government. We have been among the top three suppliers of arms and deadly chemicals to Iraq for eight years, despite the full knowledge that these weapons, both conventional and chemical, were being used on neighboring Iran, and on both Arab and Kurdish citizens of Iraq. We have given enormous amounts of economic aid to Iraq (some reports put Iraq second only to Mexico as the greatest recipient of economic aid and debt restructuring), but this aid was given with no restrictions or criticism of the policies of the recipient whom we now compare to Hitler. We are lied to and told that his war is to defend the rights and freedoms of Kuwaitis and Saudis, when both nations are governed by monarchies which have been cited numerous times by human rights organizations such as Amnesty International for egregious human and civil rights abuses including the use of torture. The same charges have been levied against almost all of our current allies in the Middle East: Israel, Egypt, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, and Syria, which has one of the world's worst records of human rights abuses. These charges have yet to be addressed in any manner by our government. We should all be appalled by the "selective indignation" of our executive branch.



Hypocrisy at Home

Americans are told that we are fighting against aggression, when our own nation has been severely reprimanded by the United Nations for the illegal invasion of Panama, a criticism which we have ignored. We coerced the United Nations into doing our bidding by withholding $185 million in back dues, which we chose to begin payment on within one day of the authorization of force. Where is the public outcry against such blatant manipulation of a body created to maintain peace in the world?

Our nation is in an economic recession bordering on depression, and yet our president sees fit to reward Turkey for its role in this war by fully forgiving its $8 billion debt to us, and by bestowing an added bonus of over $80 million. Are we simply to buy out or bomb any country which opposes us? Where is our national integrity?

The war is being fought, at the cost of thousands of lives, over viable access to oil reserves, and yet our administration has said not one word about conservation and alternative fuel sources, and has in fact slashed the alternative energy budget mercilessly.

Our president plainly said to the people of the world that he wants peace, and yet has made no serious effort to find a diplomatic solution to the myriad of crises in the Middle East, and even criticized France for proposing a peace plan at a supposedly inopportune time. Do we wish to be taken at all seriously in the world political arena as anything more than a military power? I reiterate, where is our national integrity?

The civil rights of Arab-Americans are being infringed upon by a policy of random interrogation by the FBI, and it is no secret that serious press censorship of war coverage is in effect, yet where is the public outcry? Are we to endue another shameful episode like the internment of Japanese Americans during the Second World War before stopping this outrage?

A Needed, Nonviolent Response

Tensions in this nation are running higher than we have seen since the 1960's. But we are not yet at the point of assassinations, riots, and bombings. I have an unshakable faith in the rightness of non-violent direct action, but I fear not all of my compatriots share this faith. We need look no farther than our neighbors to the south, beleaguered nations such as Colombia, El Salvador, and Peru, to what can befall a nation whose government has ceased to respond to the cries of its populace.

I have heard grave concern voiced by people from all generations and walks of life that the democratic system in this country is breaking down. We have a chronically and shamefully low voter turnout, and our national congress is so paralyzed that is unable even to assert its constitutional right to declare war. This is a crisis of government which mirrors and exacerbates the social crises of the nation.

The document which was drawn up by the demonstrators in the capitol declared that "ultimately, we are here to express our discontent with [the] unresponsiveness" of the government in the hearing of grievances, and the addressing of social problems. The reactions which I see emanating from the legislature concerning this demonstration are the same as those which caused this action: unresponsiveness, and an inability to address the broad and serious problems confronting this nation. This action must be seen as a statement to the nation that in many ways, and for many reasons, it will be our greatest folly to continue business as usual.

The facts of the crisis in which this country finds itself are frightening, as is the prospect of far more serious and violent breaches of the peace. I therefore urge you, with all the gravity which can be conveyed through the written word to view this action in the light in which it was intended: as a manifestation of the social discontent and frustration present in our community and society, and to examine and address the causes of such a drastic action as that which has occurred

Scott Douglas is an Olympia community member.

Stranger than Fiction

The Death of WIDCO

Regina Costa

Early in the morning of December 19th, the South Sound was in the grip of an arctic cold front. That wasn't the only thing on ice, however. The early edition of the *Daily Olympian* carried the front page headline *WIDCO cancels landfill for south county.*

A fight had been raging for over a year about this landfill. The company proclaimed the project to be "the most environmentally sound, technologically advanced regional solid-waste landfill in the Pacific Northwest." This view was hotly disputed by environmentalists, most notably Vicki Mercer and Chuck Sisco of Black Hills Audubon, who reviewed the technical material prepared by WIDCO to support its proposal.

When the death knell sounded people looked for answers to the question of why WIDCO would suddenly pull the plug on a project which had consumed millions of dollars and which the company vigorously defended right to the end. To date, there have been two articles in the *Daily Olympian* but they haven't included the real answer to the question.

WIDCO's line is that the bureaucrats from the Department of Ecology and Thurston County killed it. WIDCO has a formidable propaganda machine, at the center of which is a troika with strong ties to Booth Gardner: Jim Kneeland, Booth's former press Secretary turned WIDCO press liason; Bill Wilkerson and Dick Davis, ex-Gardner aide. Dick Davis wrote a letter which has been sent to solid waste specialists in numerous agencies, and presumably to every politician under the sun, blaming the demise of the landfill on bureaucratic delay.

The bureaucratic delay he is referring to is the time it took for county and ecology staff to thoroughly review the technical documents that WIDCO is required by law to prepare so that the public authorities can determine whether the landfill is safe. He is also referring to the Thurston County Prosecuting Attorney and the State Attorney General's Office, acting on behalf of the Department of Ecology. These agencies became parties to a hearing before the Pollution Control Hearings Board which considered a matter with implications for WIDCO. The issue before the board was whether county officials have the power to refuse to permit a solid waste facility that is not covered by a solid waste management plan. The county and the state argued that a county does have the power to do this. This is a significant blow to WIDCO because the Thurston County Environmental Health Department, supported by the Thurston County Prosecuting Attorney, found that WIDCO's proposed landfill did not comply with this county's solid waste management plan. This meant that the plan had to be modified before WIDCO could receive a permit. This interfered with WIDCO's plans because WIDCO had been trying to contract for garbage from jurisdictions all over Western Washington, assuring everyone that the landfill would be operating by October 1991.

Moreover, as the investigation unfolded, the staff assigned to review the project became very concerned that WIDCO's plan to put garbage on top of mine tailings was a prescription for an environmental disaster.

Publicly, the other side of the story is that WIDCO, in fact, had a terrible project. The technical material submitted to permitting agencies was inadequate. Moreover, as the investigation unfolded, the staff assigned to review the project became very concerned that WIDCO's plan to put garbage on top of mine tailings was a prescription for an environmental disaster.

But what killed WIDCO? "The Word on the Street" is this. Pacific Power and Light (PP&L) killed WIDCO. PP&L owned the coal mine where the landfill was to be located. PP&L engineers saw the articles in local newspapers, reviewed the technical documents and talked to staff of the permitting agencies. PP&L engineers believed the site to be unsafe and that a tear in the landfill's liner could produce major contamination of the Chehalis River basin. PP&L was worried about liability and demanded a $50 million dollar cash bond from WIDCO. This killed the project outright.

WIDCO's landfill probably would have died anyway. PP&L's opposition made it quicker and cleaner and saved ecology and county staff and the environmental community from having to undertake a lot of work on a project that was ill-conceived from the outset.

One aspect of the WIDCO story that should provide some encouragement is this. WIDCO tried to buy this landfill with big money and political clout. The company used every pressure imaginable to grease the skids of the permitting process, to get this thing approved on political merits while whitewashing technical problems. Only it didn't work. State and county staff carried out their analyses, resisted the pressure and became very angry with the company's attempts to circumvent the proper process. The delays were not due to deliberate attempts by bureaucrats to stall the landfill, but rather to the woefully inadequate job that WIDCO did in preparing the information required by law and to the fact that this is one of the least desirable sites for a landfill in this region.

WIDCO's political hirelings are trying to score some points with their letter. Probably the hope is that politicians will be sympathetic to future similar projects. But people on the inside know that PP&L killed this project because it was unsafe. Hopefully, "The Word on the Street" will reach the ears of the people who have received these letters.

Reprinted from the February 1991 issue of the South Sound Green Pages, published by the South Puget Environmental Education Clearing House (SPEECH).

We All Must Share This Shrinking World

by Marvin Saillard

"All Americans need is a level playing field and they can compete with any foreign manufacturers" (The Olympian, Editorial, Monday, January 21,1991). But the playing field is filled with obstacles for the manufacturers and the potential customers. The primary obstacles are land-price inflation and high taxes, both of which raise prices and discourage production. The law of supply and demand says that the higher the prices, the fewer the products that can be sold. The fewer products sold, the fewer jobs there will be. This end of the field is called underprivilege because it is full of high prices, low incomes, unemployment and poverty.

The other end of the field is called special privilege. Here is where landlords who cannot afford to develop their valuable locations because of high taxes and high prices can resort to land speculation. Valuable locations that are held out of use, or in underdeveloped use, are assessed below market value, and are taxed lightly. This makes it practical for the landlord to hold the land off the market until the scarcity of good locations inflates the price of land. The land lord then can sell the land for a much higher price than he paid for it, and he realizes a large unearned profit.

Landlords with unearned income from land specualtion can afford to buy other valuable land and make more unearned income by charging rent-of-land to other people for permission to use the land.

Except during an economic depression, there will always be someone willing to pay to use the land because there is no one in this world who can live without access to land. The net-rent-of-land-after taxes provides the land-title holder with an unearned income.

The rich get richer, and the poor get poorer because of high taxes, land-price inflations, and high prices. For the rich, high taxes get lost in the accounting department, and land-price inflation makes them rich without working. To the rich high prices are a minor annoyance.

For the poor each rise in prices turns the screw a little tighter. Those in between are running an economic obstable course trying to reach a place of special privilege. The way to clear the obstacle course is to share the earth by having the community government collect the rent-of-land as public revenue, and by doing away with all other forms of taxation. Then everyone will have a clear and level playing field.

Lets' share the world.

Marvin Salliard has been a vocational student of political economy since 1953.

Thurston County Rainbow Coalition
General Membership Meeting
March 16th
12:30 pm
1st Christian Church
7th and Franklin

Community Dialogue

Come to a community meeting to share your thoughts, concernss, frustrations and hopes about war in the Persian Gulf and its effect on our community.

Saturday March 2, 1991
1:00 to 4:00 pm
First United Methodist Church
1224 East Legion Way, Olympia

For information: 459-5590 Childcare provided.

All Things Are Connected

Bill Frank, Nisqually

My people have lived here, in the Pacific Northwest, since the beginning of time. Thousands upon thousands of years. Yet, in what seems to have been a blink of an eye, the earth we have always loved and depended on has been overpopulated and polluted. Breathable air has become endangered. The once pristine waters of Puget Sound now carry poison to her beaches. It is sad to us.

On the ocean and along all the inland waters of what is now Washington State, Indians have always enjoyed and depended on rich varieties of natural resources. Our elders have always taught us to respect Nature's gifts, to take only what we need and use all that we take. We have always depended on these gifts for food... trade... culture...our very survival. Always.

Few people today realize that the Pacific Northwest was once a paradise. Vegetables, natural medicines and fruits grew in great abundance. Cedar trees provided material for longhouses and canoes. Game was easy to find. Fish filled the rivers and marine waters. Beaches were rich with shellfish. There was hard work. But there was also time for every person to learn from the elders of the tribe, to personally experience the wonders of nature and to become spiritually and culturally enriched. There were problem times and challenges to life then, as there will always be. But, on the whole, life was simpler, cleaner and more natural.

Stark contrast to today's hectic schedules, tensive careers and traffic jams.

But don't think the tribes foster any unrealistic hopes that the hands of the clock will magically begin to spin backward. We cannot shape our fingers and somehow make the millions of people who now occupy this land disappear.

We must live in this modern world, and do what we can to keep it liveable. we must have jobs. We must have schools. We must have sustenance. At the same time, we must do what we can to respect our ancestry. Our survival, as Indians, depends on our linkage with our past. There is much that we can all learn through the wisdom of the ages. Indian and non-Indian alike must listen to the lessons passed along through the generations, lessons that kept this land and its resources healthy and pure from time immemorial.

The non-Indian approach to nature has been different from ours in many ways. The non-Indian has generally attempted to separate himself from his environment. The pouring of concrete and the erection of skyscrapers has established a mental buffer between people and the natural resources that sustain them. When children pour their Coca Puffs into their plastic bowls in the morning, then drown it with homogenized, pasteurized milk, they do not stop to give thanks to the elements of nature that were used to provide even these gifts.

But the connection is there. All things are connected. We must acknowledge this. All of us. We must teach it to our children. Indian and non-Indian.

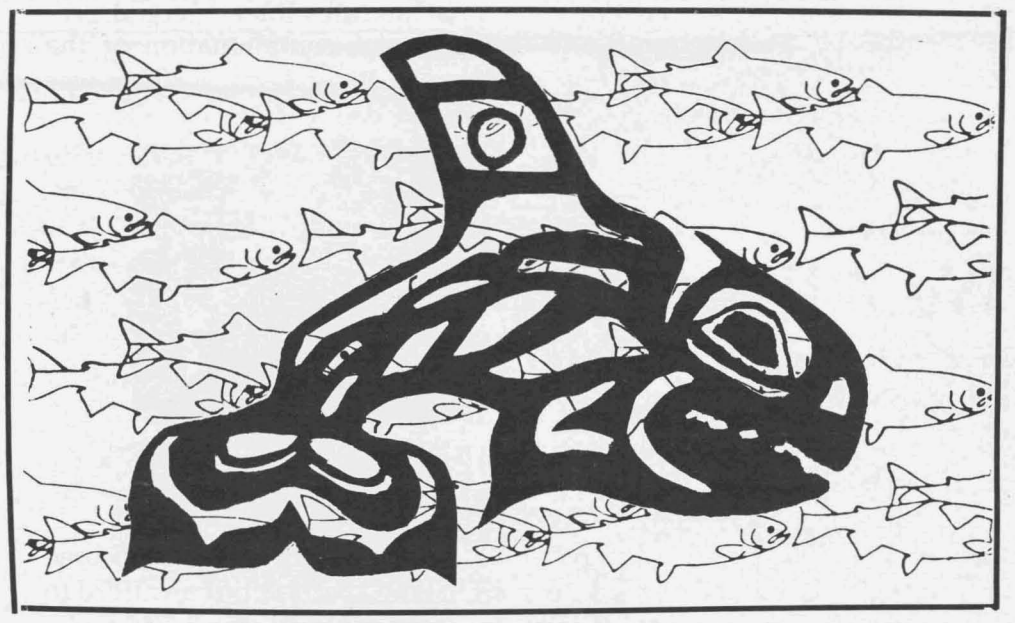
Our elders ask you to remember this. We are all creations of God. We all depend on His generosity for survival. His generosity is relevant to our respect for his gifts.

The Indian must walk in two worlds. That is certain. The same people who had the foresight to reserve natural resources to the tribes at the time of the treaties left other legacies, as well. When we take the time to thank the Creator for the fish in our First Salmon Ceremonies, when we Pow Wow and when we pray, we acknowledge these legacies and we pledge to pass them on to our descendants.

Take only what you need. Use all that you take.

Few people realize that all contemporary efforts to conserve and protect natural resources have their roots in Indian Country. Conservation is key among these, of course, as is the practice of ceremoniously reminding ourselves and our children to be grateful for that which we receive.

Indian and non-Indian alike must listen to the lessons passed along through the generations, lessons that kept this land and its resources healthy and pure from time immemorial.



The concepts of negotiation, cooperation and sharing are also Indian traditions. Our councils stem from ancient times. Our great grandfathers practiced resource enhancement, when and where it was needed, as well as escapement, the practice of permitting certain numbers of salmon to swim by before harvesting began.

But natural resource management today does present unique challenges. Challenges that the tribes have dedicated themselves to addressing.

Dams have been erected on the rivers, and they have had an enormous impact on natural salmon stocks. Working with sports fishermen and others interested in protecting these runs, we have been successful over recent years in elevating the status of the salmon in the dam licensing process. We have not achieved everything we hope to in this regard, but progress has been substantial. At times, we have been forced to resort to litigation to achieve these ends. But much of the progress is now made at the planning table, which provides maximum opportunity to safeguard the future of hydropower at the same time. We have no wish to jeopardize the production of electricity. We use it, too. We do wish to have the electric companies make the right choices. If hydropower is to be used, do not do so at the cost of one of our most precious resources. Provide adequate fish passage facilities. Install protection for outmigrating smolts. Stop building dams, such as the ones on the Elwha River, which have been proved to be disproportionately destructive to valuable fish resources. In short, do the right thing.

Uncontrolled timber harvest has cause serious damage to fish habitat over the past century through sedimentation of spawning beds and destruction of shade and insect habitat. The tribes have been very active in the efforts to remedy these problems, along with the state, citizens' organizations and the timber industry, itself. Things are not black and white. Yes, the industry has been responsible for substantial damage to the fish resource over the years, and the state must assume blame for not providing adequate protection. But these same entities, in concert with the tribes, must be credited for reversing this trend, and everyone in this state should strongly support the cooperative management process, which has led to such progressive processes as the Timber/Fish/Wildlife Agreement.

Fishery management has taken giant strides in this state, due directly to cooperative state/tribal management. Sport and commercial fishermen knowledgeable about the process credit it with the preservation of natural stocks, as well as effective enhancement. Tribal owned and operated hatcheries release an average of 50 million fish every year.

Cooperative management draws millions of federally appropriated dollars into this state every year. This is money that directly benefits the fish resource, and which would otherwise go somewhere else.

There are those who do not understand these basic facts, and who choose to lash out at the tribes, as they have always done. From cowboy movies to history books, the tribes have been portrayed time and time again with incredible inaccuracy. And yet people are quick to believe that which they do not understand. Those who believe the tribes are their enemies simply do not have all the facts.

If their goal is to preserve natural resources, to live in harmony with nature, and to simultaneously promote a clean and healthy economy, the tribes may well be their best friends. Now is the time for all of us, more than ever, to work together. Let us dedicate ourselves to that effort.

Bill Frank, Jr., Nisqually tribal member, is also chairman of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, which represents the fisheries interests of 20 Western Washington Treaty Indian Tribes.

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provides the land-title holder with an unearned income.

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Lets' share the world.

Marvin Salliard has been a vocational student of political economy since 1953.

Investment Board Surprises

Meta Heller

The State Investment Board met at the Department of Transportation February 11. Evelyn Montague was busy, so I went alone.

Ordinarily, we Rainbowers are the only public present. Not we that day. Something ominous was in the wind.

In the audience were an assistant attorney general, several groups of Seattle lawyers, P.R. reps from DL&I and DCD, a person from a private P.R. firm with "interests" in the Investment Board -- and Rebecca Boren, former Seattle Weekly political columnist, now on special assignment for the P-I.

Speaker Joe King was there (unusual). Senator Dan McDonald was not there (a regular attendee). That was explained later in the day when Senator Jeanette Hayner was sworn-in to take MCDonald's place. Northcroft of State Pensions, Linquist of Teachers' Pensions, and State Treasurer Dan Grimm were the only other Board -- barely a quorum (5 out of 9) with chairman Joe Dear of DL&I.

As I was sitting down, the surprises began. In soft tones, Executive Director David Weig began reading a statement: "I wish to respond to the allegations presented in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer articles of February 8, 1991, to clarify the record and defend my principles.

"I was informed in a meeting with three members of the Board in September that my contract would not be renewed in June 1991. They acknowledged my high integrity, technical skills and competency. The Board want to hire a more pro-active Executive Director. I was not asked to resign immediately. To the contrary, I was given advance notice to provide me with time to seek other employment."

I could feel the presence of hatchet-woman Boren, if not see her glee.

Weig went on. He said five out of the nine voting members were new to the Board since he was hired seven years ago. (Each is appointed by the governor.) He had statistics to show the over-all performance record during his tenure had been good. He reminded all that many parties participate in the process of Board investing. It is not the result of any one individual's doing.

In ending he said, "I have done my best (to protect the public retirement systems and their assets entrusted to the Board) and wish them well in the future."

David Weig had become our friend a Rainbow friend. I was saddened to hear him defend his integrity and to witness the events which followed. The Board stripped him of current authority. They passed a motion to search nationwide for a new pro-active director. They voted to hire an outside consultant to review the structure of the State Investment Board and the management of its operations.

"What does pro-active mean?" I asked around. "Pro-governor", was the reply, if any, I got.

Most of the facts have been reported since in The Olympian via the A.P. But, Rebecca Boren and the P-I are still muckraking, throwing the worst possible light on David Weig.

The Board has since acknowledged the administrative staff is woefully small to administer an $18 billion pension fund, that all contracts for venture capital agreements have never been adequately reviewed by attorneys, etc. In time, they will improve the operations --- but, in the meantime, we Rainbowers have lost a friend. Since we have been attending their meetings, the State Investment Board has brought aboard a woman as one of 5 financial advisers (PLU professor). They've hired women and black investment firms to manage a little bit of their money. They've begun to use their proxy votes as stockholders to call for divestiture in S. African operations.

I believe our presence has made a difference. I believe the Investment Board and staff were basically good. Quiet, competent David Weig, and some of the Board, were listening. They were moving toward socially responsible investing, as best they could.

We lost a pro-activist -- David Weig.

Meta is a TCRC member and long-time tax reform activist.

Building Peace

A small group of community people have organized around the theme of "Building Peace". On Monday, March 25th, from 5:30 - 6:30 pm, a gathering is scheduled at the Capitol steps, where Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen and others will address ways that individuals can promote peace. The theme, Building Peace, will be continued through a series of educational forums in April. Topics will include: re-examining U.S. foreign policy and transitioning to a peace-time economy.

You are invited with friends and family to join in these events and share in the common goal of lasting peace. For further information call Cathy Cooper 352-4251 or Michele Zodrow 754-1219.

An Ancient Forest Benefit

On April 14 and 15 the Ancient Forest Chautaqua (AFC) will educate us, entertain us, and activate our fantasies of turning all remaining ancient forests into "natural reserves". To have to reserve nature from human abuse... we are funny creatures! April 14 will see the Capital theatre come alive with the AFC roadshow, including music, theatre, and speakers. On April 15 the AFC will give presentations to schools and sponsor various other events.

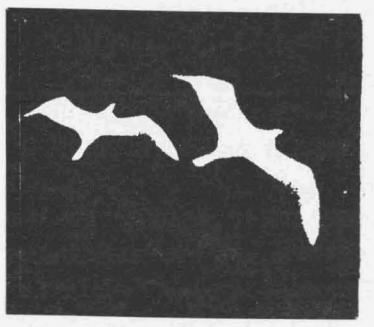
The AFC is travelling south along the west coast of the U.S. during April and early May to get people excited about and actively helping to save what is left of our rain forests, both temperate and tropical. The plan is then to continue south from San Diego through the tropical climates and down to temperate zones of Chile. Here in Washington State there is a sister ancient forest project under way, with a parcel in Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

There will be an AFC benefit on March 15 at the TESC library lobby at 8pm featuring Citizens Band and the Defenders. Proceeds from the AFC are going to ancient forest protection groups from British Columbia to Chile. Please support our ancient forests and the AFC. For information and (or) to get involved with the AFC, call 459-2385 or 524-0194.

FleeingTheWake Cohasset, WA

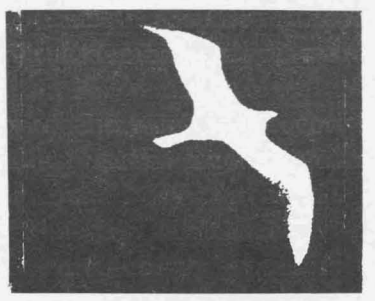
1/ The sound of the knowledge of war is enough,
lawn mower blades whirred against cement, the pain,
ivory crushed in the ear passages: there is more; complexity,
a large snake unwinding itself is going many directions at once,
thirty percent of the troops are black,
twelve percent of the nation is black.

15/ Peace, where innocence gestures like a choked dog:
I imagine the deaths, bells pealing, every day, ashes blown,
blown, blowing: countless, proliferating from themselves, the way
the dunes are changing shape.



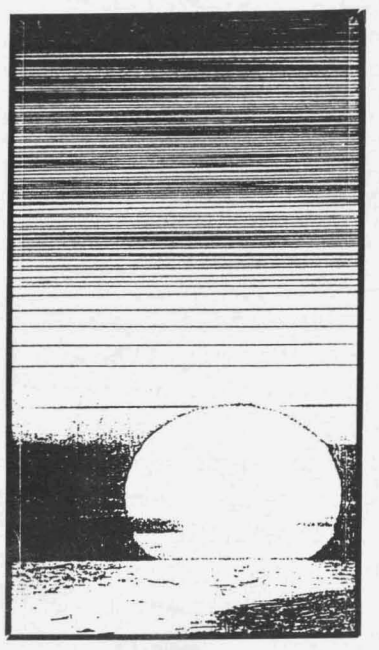
Across the sea and parallel to the shore
a sheath of birds rides the air.
Their numbers seem endless;
I try to keep pace with
them, this morning, running,
but find myself left behind.
They fly low, waves cracking and
breaking the speace between us so I
confuse them with the water.

91 Resins in the newsprint of war, the media is a wicker basket
under the hot air balloon of the nation: S & L crisis, the Bank of
New England crashed, unemployment insurance, a maze,
brings images of horizons flung farther than we can see,
the outlines of humans radiated onto stone.



The huckleberries are full:
thirty miles south of me
pelicans are making dives towards
the clay beach, stopping before heading
south to rock northern California
This one moment
is breath,
is rejoicing for the life expressed.

1/15/91 We, the people of the United States, buy guns, are taxed
for the killing in El Salvador, in Guatemala;
shrouds of sand rise over the cotton of this fabric,
we cannot house people in Seattle, in Olympia, in Portland,
snow flung to the ground, over bodies: cold out there.
The sand shimmers with the reflection:
we had broken the code before Peral Harbor was bombed,
we knew:
remember Tule Lake, Hart Mountain
/the corner of your eye Iran-Contra.



Impotence, an exposed vein pulsing,
we are in no position to know
what kind of deals are being cut.
After running, my legs are wasted,
tidepools
become mirages, drifting skies make
iridescent sound: muscles slip and slide
with the stretch, I stand,
the waves, the birds,
my lungs are choked with the images of
bodies laid down, whole and restless.
Only so much force
to withstand this pressure,
the oil boiling in the vein,
cracking the tissues, bringing blood;
the birds flying low, space being cracked
and broken by waves between us,
I confuse them with the water.

ONE/FIFTEEN/NINETY-ONE
Kate Miller